IN UNISON 2000:
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN CANADA

FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

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Message from Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services*

We are pleased to present this report, which marks another step forward in the shared efforts of governments and the disability community. Building on the vision articulated in the 1998 *In Unison* vision paper, this report sets the stage for a new national consensus on disability issues that brings together all sectors.

As the statistical indicators and personal stories presented in this report demonstrate, people with disabilities face significant challenges in achieving full participation in Canadian society. The effective practices stories are examples of promising initiatives under way in several sectors, in every province and territory.

We must build on this progress, learn from each other's experiences, and continue to strengthen partnerships across Canada, including persons with disabilities, employers, labour unions, community organizations, disability advocates and governments.

This report is evidence of our commitment to continue working together and to give disability issues the priority they require if this important work is to continue moving forward.

In releasing this report, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the individuals from the disability community who shared their time, advice, and constructive criticism as the report was developed. Representatives of the five

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*Quebec shares the concerns raised in this *In Unison* report. However, the Government of Quebec did not take part in the development of *In Unison* in 1998 or this document because it wishes to assume control over programs for persons with disabilities for Quebec. Consequently, any references in this document to joint federal/provincial/territorial positions do not include Quebec.

national Aboriginal organizations also participated and articulated their own perspective. We also had the benefit of research and analysis from some of Canada's top experts on disability.

Over the past year, we have consulted with representatives of a number of disability organizations. These people have been drawn from national, provincial, and territorial levels, and have helped ensure we are accountable. We recognize that future engagement will necessarily involve much more comprehensive and ongoing communication and collaboration. This report is an important step in that ongoing process, to which we are all committed. We are also committed to continued progress on these issues both within our own jurisdictions and cooperatively, and to continued work with disability organizations and consumers in drawing other sectors into the discussion and in developing policies and strategies for the future.

We will continue working together to achieve the vision of *In Unison* — we invite other partners and all Canadians to work with us.

Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers
Responsible for Social Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

Introduction

This report sets the stage for governments, persons with disabilities, disability advocates, communities, employers, labour and the non-profit sector to jointly focus on disability issues. It builds on the framework document entitled "*In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues*," which was released in 1998 by federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for social services.

This report aims to provide Canadians with a broad view of how adults with disabilities have been faring in comparison with those without disabilities, using both statistical indicators and examples of personal experiences. Examples of effective practices that have been implemented across Canada are also woven into the report.

Members of several disability organizations from the national, provincial and territorial levels worked with federal, provincial and territorial government officials during the development of this report. A smaller group of disability community members, as well as representatives of the five national Aboriginal organizations, provided comments and input to drafts of this report.

Disability Supports

Disability supports are goods and services that assist people with disabilities in overcoming barriers to participating fully in daily living, including economic and social activities.

The 1998 *In Unison* framework identified three objectives for the future development of disability supports: accessibility, portability, and an individual focus.

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For supports to be accessible, they need to be affordable, available and appropriate for the needs of the individual. Portability — or continuity — means that people have continued access to comparable supports when they make transitions across life situations or geographic locations. Supports that are provided with an individual focus are flexible, responsive to individual needs, and provide persons with disabilities with maximum control over the provision of disability supports.

Many programs across Canada now provide some supports through a form of financing called self-managed or individualized funding, where consumers are provided with the funding to manage their own supports, such as the hiring and management of attendant or respite services. Individualized funding allows greater self-determination, choice and control for the people directly affected by the service.

The involvement of family and advocates in service provision can help increase the independence of the individual, especially for persons with developmental disabilities. Support to family caregivers can often prevent a crisis and the need for more expensive interventions.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities have observed pioneering self-management models and have expressed interest in developing similar systems. Aboriginal people point also to the unavailability of respite care and a lack of services for children with disabilities in many Aboriginal communities.

Effective practices in this area demonstrate the importance of strong partnerships — between governments, community organizations, employers, learning institutions, and persons with disabilities.

A number of initiatives are underway to address issues of portability and accessibility. The separation of eligibility for disability supports from eligibility for other programs is a key issue.

One of the barriers to improving supports is a lack of data. Along with other research on disability that is being supported through the 2000 federal budget, the 2001 Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS) will provide important information for all sectors to help develop solutions to disability supports issues.

Many disability advocates and organizations have also called for a refundable disability tax credit that would reimburse individuals for more of their actual out-of-pocket disability-related costs. Many issues would need to be examined in exploring this idea.

Some disability advocates have called on governments to provide more incentives and direct funding to enhance accessibility.

Employment

For many people with disabilities, paid or voluntary work — whether full- or part-time — is a key to independence and full participation in their communities.

Key employment issues for persons with disabilities include the following:

- low level of participation in the labour market;
- less likelihood of having full-time, full-year employment than adults without disabilities; and
- high unemployment.

Effective practices show that employers can be successful when they take a proactive approach to recruiting and maintaining persons with disabilities as part of their skilled workforce. Research has shown that enhanced access to education, training and skills development, through disability supports and accommodation in learning institutions, can help build this important bridge to full inclusion through employment.

Persons with disabilities have advocated for a consumer-driven approach to training and vocational rehabilitation that permits the fine-tuning that is needed for participants to proceed at their own rate, and with the interventions they require.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities say that training must incorporate the principles of their cultural frameworks.

Persons with disabilities and disability advocates have called for a comprehensive labour market strategy involving collaboration by employers, unions, community groups, learning institutions, as well as governments and persons with disabilities.

Income

To fully participate in society, people must have enough income to adequately meet their needs. The costs associated with disability supports play a big role in determining how much income a person with disabilities requires.

Unfortunately, those who are participating in the labour market do not usually get the same kind of assistance as those who receive support from public programs, even if their income is very low.

There is widespread agreement that it is desirable for employment to be the greatest possible source of income, as reduced dependence on government income support can enhance citizenship and a person's sense of self-reliance. The income safety net must ensure that financial assistance is available where it is needed most.

Key income issues for persons with disabilities include the following:

- Persons with disabilities rely more on government transfers and less on employment earnings than do people without disabilities;
- Persons with disabilities tend to have lower incomes and more dependence on

government income support programs than their counterparts without disabilities; and

- Employed persons with disabilities have lower earnings than those without disabilities.

The income available to a person with a disability is directly related to the cost and availability of disability supports, and to the person's ability to earn income through employment. Successful income strategies focus on the inter-relationship of these elements and others such as education and training.

The transition to employment is a key point. Persons with disabilities have pointed out that a continued base of income and disability supports is crucial during transition to employment.

A related issue is the advantage of separating eligibility for disability supports from eligibility for income support programs.

Better coordination of income support programs and improved communication between programs, employers and others have been highlighted as key issues.

Disability advocates have called for a nationally integrated income support program for people with disabilities.

Next steps

In developing the indicators and gathering the effective practices for this report, governments have strengthened their understanding of issues needing attention and promising directions that are worth exploring.

Since the release of the *In Unison* vision in 1998, governments have been working to improve their programs and services consistent with the *In Unison* principles. At the federal/provincial/territorial level, ministers of social services have identified two initial priorities for further exploration and research. The ministers recently agreed to explore the feasibility of joint work on analyzing labour market needs for persons with disabilities and on assessing the feasibility of a new disability tax benefit to assist with the costs of disability supports. Both of these ideas will require analysis and research.

In the area of disability supports, it is clear that strong partnerships are needed to address the issues of accessibility, portability and continuity, and individual focus in helping offset costs. In employment, the involvement of a range of sectors in developing solutions is essential, and the importance of education and training must be acknowledged. Governments recognize that income programs work best when they are flexible and support persons with disabilities in their efforts to enter the labour market.

Reaching the goal of full inclusion is a major challenge for all Canadians. Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments are committed to continued work with members of the disability community, Aboriginal organizations, and other sectors, each of which has a role to play in identifying issues, sharing ideas and developing solutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Melissa Rezansoff's Story

There is no time for pity in Melissa Rezansoff's world. Melissa, who is a quadriplegic, is too busy improving herself and working for the betterment of others in her position as the Saskatchewan Regional Manager for the Neil Squire Foundation.

Melissa grew up on the Kahakwisthaw First Nation as one of thirteen children. After attending a residential school and living with her family in Calgary and Vancouver, things turned for the worse when her family returned to the reserve when she was thirteen. There was little to occupy her time and soon she started to hang around with the 'wrong crowd'. At seventeen it seemed to her that life had no meaning.

"I decided that I wasn't going to live that way any more," Melissa remembers. Following an argument with her boyfriend, she went to the basement of her home, where her father kept his guns, locked the door, took a .22 calibre rifle and shot herself. Instead of entering her head, the bullet went through her neck, nicking the vertebrae and wedging a bone fragment against her spinal cord, paralyzing her.

During the long months of rehabilitation, Melissa 'reinvented' herself. She pursued an education, studying accounting, computers and small business management. She set a goal to live independently, and moved into the Houston Heights apartments in Regina, for people with disabilities.

Before long, Melissa's big break came when the Neil Squire Foundation, which had opened an office in Regina, contacted her as a potential program participant. Four months into her program, a position as an office administration assistant opened; Melissa applied for and got the job. By 1997, she had become the regional manager.

Today, Melissa Rezansoff works with politicians, bureaucrats, community leaders, First Nation Chiefs, and people with disabilities. She draws from her many experiences and has transformed her job into a way of life.

Melissa wants to carry her message to the public. She feels that it is wrong that people with disabilities are written off by their communities, as everyone has something of value to contribute, and therefore should be encouraged, not pitied.

Source: Abridged from the article by Frank Kusch, The Indigenous Times, Volume 7 Issue 5, Fall 1999 Edition. Used by permission.

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One in six Canadians and one in three Aboriginal people in Canada have a disability.[1] People with disabilities live in every neighbourhood and every community in Canada. Their aspirations are no different from people without disabilities — they want to enjoy full citizenship through participation in Canadian society.

This report sets the stage for governments, persons with disabilities, disability advocates, communities, employers, labour and the non-profit sector to jointly focus on disability issues. It builds on the framework document entitled *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues*, which was released in 1998, by federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for social services.

In Unison marked the first time that Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments came together to express a common vision on disability issues. They also committed to creating an accountability framework to monitor progress toward fulfilling that vision.

The 1998 *In Unison* expressed a vision of persons with disabilities participating fully in their communities and in society. This 2000 report aims to provide Canadians with a broad view of how adults with disabilities have been faring in comparison with those without disabilities, using both statistical indicators and examples of personal experiences. Examples of effective

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[1] Statistics in this report come from a variety of sources, including Census data, the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID), the 1991 Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS) and the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS). This report discusses the need for improved and timelier data. Please see Appendix A for more information on data sources, methodology and limitations.

practices that have been implemented across Canada are also woven into the report. The situation of Aboriginal persons with disabilities is specifically highlighted.[2]

In presenting statistics and stories, this report identifies barriers and areas where it may be possible to make continued progress toward full participation. Opportunities for further progress that are identified in this report provide a range of ideas that could be pursued by all sectors to help achieve the vision of full inclusion. This report is meant to complement other reporting mechanisms associated with specific government programs.

This report focuses on the situation of working-age adults with disabilities, reflecting the original parameters of *In Unison*. This focus is not intended to minimize the importance of improving the participation of children and seniors with disabilities in all aspects of society. Governments agree that the needs of all people with disabilities must be addressed, regardless of their age.

The Vision

The 1998 *In Unison* framework proposed a 'Canadian Approach' to disability issues that is summed up in the following vision statement:

"Persons with disabilities participate as full citizens in all aspects of Canadian society. The full participation of persons with disabilities requires the commitment of all segments of society. The realization of the vision will allow adults with disabilities to maximize their independence and enhance their well being though access to required supports and the elimination of barriers that prevent their full participation."

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[2] Canada's constitution recognizes three groups of people as Aboriginal: Indian (First Nations); Inuit; and Métis. Where the term 'Aboriginal' is used in this report, it refers to any one of these three groups or to off-reserve Aboriginal people living in urban or rural settings.

A Canadian Perspective on Disability Issues

Canadians share basic values that help define us as a nation. These include a commitment to inclusion — welcoming everyone to participate fully in society.

The vast majority of Canadians believe that persons with disabilities should be supported in their efforts to be active in their communities and society. Yet we still have a long way to go to fulfill this goal.

Disability Facts and Figures

- In 1991, 16 per cent of Canadians were considered to have a disability. That is 4.2 million people — 3.9 million living in the community, and 273,000 in institutions.
- Fifty-six per cent of people with disabilities were of working-age; nine per cent were children under 14, and 35 per cent were people over 65.
- In 1991, among working aged women, 13 per cent were considered to have a disability.
- Slightly more than half of adults living with a disability were affected by a mild disability, one third were considered to have a moderate disability, and 14 per cent were affected by a severe disability.
- The 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey revealed that 31 per cent of Aboriginal adults reported some form of disability – almost twice the national average.
- The disability rate among young adults was almost three times higher for Aboriginal people than for non-Aboriginal people.
- Sixty-six per cent of Aboriginal adults with disabilities were affected by a mild disability, 22 per cent by a moderate disability and 12 per cent by severe disability.
- The likelihood of a person having a disability increases with age. As Canada's population ages, the incidence of disability is increasing.

Citizenship for people with disabilities depends on having the supports necessary to take part in work and community activities. It also depends on having access to public and private facilities and to decision-making processes.

Every person with a disability faces a unique situation, determined by a variety of factors including the nature of their disability, their family situation and their community, as well as their cultural context — an important consideration in a multicultural society.

Those who live in northern, rural and remote communities — of which a high proportion are Aboriginal people — face special challenges that differ from residents of urban southern Canada, including a lack of supports, high unemployment, transportation challenges and difficulty in getting access to a wide range of services in areas where the population is smaller and more dispersed.

The Vision of *In Unison*

The 1998 *In Unison* vision affirms the importance of full participation in society for persons with disabilities. It recognizes the need for specialized services for persons with disabilities in order to make sure they have the same opportunities as other Canadians.

The 1998 *In Unison* framework identified three key building blocks that are essential to enabling full citizenship for people with disabilities:

- **Disability supports** — A range of goods and services that are essential for the active participation of people with disabilities at home, at work or school and in the community.
- **Employment** — Enhanced employability, entry or re-entry into the labour market and paid work that contributes to economic independence, along with access to opportunities for education and training that are vital to gaining employment.

- **Income** — Financial resources that are essential to the well-being and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The 1998 *In Unison* framework reflects a government perspective of organizing issues around the mandates of different sectors, objectives, and program areas.

The framework also acknowledges the importance of developing flexible policy solutions in order to meet individual needs. Each person with a disability is unique and their specific needs, aspirations and challenges are influenced by their type of disability, stage of life, family, community and cultural context,

Citizenship

The concept of citizenship is central to disability issues. Citizenship is the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of Canadian society — the ability of a person to be actively involved with their community. Full citizenship depends on equality, inclusion, rights and responsibilities, and empowerment and participation.

Different people choose to participate in various ways, so there is no single measure of whether or not a person is able to exercise full citizenship. Citizenship can be reflected in economic activity, involvement with community activities and organizations, political participation and in other ways.

A person is able to exercise full citizenship when they do not face barriers that significantly reduce their ability to participate fully in their community.

Persons with disabilities and their advocates have argued that ensuring full citizenship is not just the right thing to do, but is also a matter of fundamental rights under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people have a somewhat different vision of citizenship due to their unique position in Canada, as Aboriginal people seek full citizenship both within their own Nations and in Canada.

and other characteristics. Aboriginal persons with disabilities, for example, view disability issues within frameworks that reflect their own cultural principles.

The various perspectives of the disability community, including Aboriginal persons with disabilities, are outlined briefly in the next two sections of this chapter.

Perspective of Members of the Disability Community

Persons with disabilities and disability advocates have indicated that they are encouraged by the principles and the vision of the 1998 *In Unison*, and that the framework provides a basis on which the disability community can work with governments to address disability-related issues and concerns.

Members of several disability organizations from the national, provincial and territorial levels, worked with federal, provincial and territorial government officials during the development of this report (Appendix D includes a list of participants). A smaller group of disability community members provided comments and input to drafts of this report.

Members of the disability community have explained that, while they are willing to work with governments on this report, they want to move beyond reporting on issues to concrete action to address them. They acknowledge the work that is taking place in individual jurisdictions, and want to see the federal, provincial and territorial governments work together on joint initiatives as part of a coordinated plan.

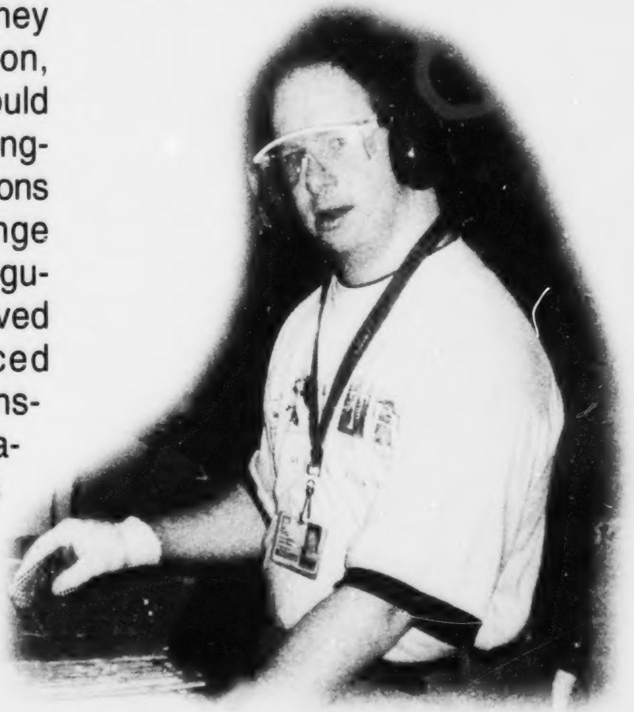
Disability community members emphasize the need for a broad encompassing approach to disability issues that goes beyond the three building blocks of *In Unison*. They suggest, for example, that 'an access and inclusion lens' should be applied to all activities of governments, from human resources to the broad range of programs delivered.

Community members stress the importance of basing the Canadian vision of citizenship on the right of each individual to fully participate in all aspects of society. They argue that this vision of citizenship implies a broader focus than working-age adults, and that attention should also be drawn to the needs of children and seniors with disabilities. They emphasize that having a disability is a challenge shared by the entire family.

Some members of the disability community who took part in this process have outlined where they see the priority areas for action, and the types of action that should be taken. They suggest that bringing about full citizenship for persons with disabilities requires change in such areas as: legislative, regulatory and policy reform; improved research and data; enhanced accessibility of information, transportation, communications, infrastructure and technology; as well as use of technology to advance accessibility.

Members of the disability community have highlighted disability supports as a top priority. They have formulated a position on what they believe should be the fundamental principles of a coordinated plan on disability supports.

Community members have also outlined the elements that could form a comprehensive labour market strategy for persons with disabilities, and have identified the issues that need to be considered in assessing the adequacy of income support systems.



While federal, provincial and territorial governments are the authors of this report, the involvement of community members has been integral to developing a stronger document. Members of the disability community confirmed from their own experience the barriers they face, information that is illustrated by statistics in this report. They also helped identify challenges and opportunities for further progress.

Aboriginal Perspectives

Representatives of the five national Aboriginal organizations were involved during the development of this report: The Assembly of First Nations, the Congress of Aboriginal People, The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the Métis National Council and the Native Women's Association of Canada.

Just as Canada's disability community is diverse, so too is the Aboriginal disability community. The experience of First Nations people living on reserve is not identical to that faced by Inuit people, Aboriginal people living off reserve or Métis people. However, there are many issues on which the organizations representing Canada's Aboriginal people have similar views.

Following the release of *In Unison* in 1998, Aboriginal organizations issued discussion or position papers outlining their positions on disability issues affecting Aboriginal people. These included the documents *One Voice*, produced by the Aboriginal Reference Group on Disability Issues, *First Perspective*, produced by The Assembly of First Nations, and *Empowerment — The Key to Better Living for Métis People with Disabilities*, produced by the Métis National Council. Although these documents presented varying viewpoints, they consistently suggested that unique frameworks are needed to address the situation and needs of Aboriginal people.

One Voice, for example, emphasizes a holistic approach with the four key principles of the Medicine Wheel: emotional, spiritual, mental, physical. The Métis National

Council model emphasizes the principles of programs and services that are community-based, client-centred and evaluated, and Métis-specific in approach. The First Nations vision, expressed in *First Perspective*, sets out a model comprising (East) capacity building; (South) jurisdiction; (West) self-sufficiency; and (North) sharing.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities consider it vital to stay connected to their families, communities and culture. But traditional First Nations, Inuit and Métis health and healing services are not necessarily recognized and supported. Coupled with a shortage of trained professionals in Aboriginal communities, this means that Aboriginal persons with disabilities must often leave their communities for care in urban areas, including institutional settings. There, they often experience isolation and cultural alienation.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities place a priority on programs and services that are designed, developed and provided by Aboriginal people, in a manner that respects the principles of their cultural frameworks. As First Nations, Inuit and Métis people take on more responsibility for services to people in their own communities, it is important to address these inequalities by working in partnership to find common solutions to common problems, regardless of jurisdiction.

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This Report

This report describes the situation of persons with disabilities based on data available when it was prepared.

Three main types of information are used in this report to present a picture of the situation of persons with disabilities:

- **Indicators** are statistical measures used to present information in areas like income and employment, where it is possible to quantify how people with disabilities are faring in comparison with Canadians without disabilities. There are limitations in data availability, particularly in the area of disability supports. (See Appendix A for an explanation of data sources and methodology).
- **Effective practices** are examples of initiatives that show promise in supporting the full inclusion of persons with disabilities. Some of these initiatives have proven successful over the years; others represent new directions being explored. The examples presented in this report are not intended to be comprehensive.
- **Personal stories** convey both the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and positive steps that have been taken to address them. Since many concepts important to persons with disabilities — such as citizenship — are not easily measured, personal stories provide a valuable complement to indicators and effective practices.

Finally, this report presents some of the opportunities for future progress that have been identified by people with disabilities, governments and other sectors.

2. DISABILITY SUPPORTS

Brenda Lea Tully's Story

Like many people with disabilities, Brenda Lea Tully has become a highly skilled navigator in her efforts to find the disability-related supports she needs. Diagnosed in early childhood with progressive spinal cord muscular atrophy, Brenda Lea, along with her family, became acquainted early on with the complex and often multi-faceted approach to service delivery for persons with disabilities.

Brenda Lea requires an electric wheelchair, a speaking valve, a permanent tracheotomy for continuous oxygen flow, and a range of other accommodations to support daily living. She attends university and is nearing completion of a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree. She receives support from an adult services vocational rehabilitation counsellor, from campus disability services and from a federal government Canada Study Grant.

This spirited and highly articulate young woman describes the road to getting disability supports as both challenging and rewarding. In November 1999, Brenda Lea moved from her rural family home to an apartment in the city. This move did not come easily, as Brenda Lea faced another set of barriers in addressing her attendant care support needs at home and in the community.

Brenda Lea is currently employed as a resource worker in a summer program for children with disabilities. After graduation, she plans to obtain her Master of Social Work degree and work with chronically and terminally ill children in a hospital setting. Undoubtedly, her desire to use her skills and life experience in her future career will have a positive effect on others and will contribute to continued positive change for herself and her community.

Horst Peters' Story

Supportive services can make a tremendous difference in the quality of life and community involvement of people with mental illness. By the time he was 43 years old, Horst Peters had held 45 different jobs and had moved 25 times in search of a "brand new start." Performing as an amateur violinist, Horst found himself experiencing cycles of depression and panic, which grew in intensity and duration as time went on. In April 1990, he experienced a severe bout of depression, leading him to consider suicide as an alternative to the pain and turmoil.

With ongoing therapy and medication, Horst has been able to address the symptoms that once overwhelmed him and to regain a sense of control in his life. He has received support from the Canadian Mental Health Association, Salvation Army Crisis Services, a psychiatrist and nurse therapist, and most importantly, from his peers. Horst participated in training as a mental health worker and as a group facilitator in a program designed specifically for consumers of mental health services.

After 18 months working as a peer counsellor in a mental health respite shelter, Horst became coordinator of a provincial consumer empowerment program, where he has remained for more than two years. Horst has facilitated over 100 workshops, presenting a consumer perspective on the impact of mental illness and the potential for recovery. He remains active as a member of several boards and working groups, a consultant for service organizations, and is currently the chairperson of the regional Canadian Mental Health Association.

Horst attributes his success to the timely and effective supports he received and notes, "It's so gratifying to me to share the tools, insights and experiences I have to help people gain control of their lives." His perspective highlights the need for available and accessible supports to assist citizens with disabilities in achieving their goals and in contributing fully to the community.

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Issues and Challenges: Disability Supports

Disability supports are goods and services that assist people with disabilities in overcoming barriers to participating fully in daily living, including economic and social activities. Supports can include human supports (such as attendant services, interpreter services and respite care), technical aids and devices (such as wheelchairs, talking computers and Braille readers), and other supports (such as counseling, physio- or psychotherapy, and prescription drugs). Some people need extensive supports such as attendant care, while others need few supports, such as a hearing aid.

Disability supports are tools for inclusion. They are critical if people with disabilities are going to lead fulfilling lives and participate fully in their communities. Without them, many people with disabilities are not able to fulfill their social and economic potential.

In addition to being a key building block to full inclusion, disability supports are also directly linked to the building blocks of employment and income. For example, in 1991, 44 per cent of people with disabilities were not participating in the labour market, although more than half of these indicated that they would have been capable of participating if barriers and disincentives were removed (Health and Activity Limitation Survey, HALS, 1991).

There are several possible mechanisms for providing disability supports:

- direct provision of supports to individuals and family or non-family caregivers (such as home care);
- funding to individuals to offset the cost of disability supports (such as those provided through the tax system); and
- measures to increase society's capacity for inclusion (such as building codes to ensure that public spaces are accessible).

While this report focuses on working-age adults with disabilities, the importance of disability supports in the lives of children, families and seniors is also recognized. Disability supports provided to children at an early age can promote optimal development and reduce the need for more intensive supports at a later stage. Disability supports become more important as people get older so, as the Canadian population ages, we can expect an increasing demand for disability supports.

Some Key Disability Supports Indicators

- In 1991, more than a million working-age Canadians with disabilities needed help with one or more everyday activities. This number represented just under half of all working age adults with disabilities.
- Of those requiring help with everyday activities, 47 per cent reported that they received all the help they needed, 42 per cent said they received help but that they needed more, and 11 per cent said they needed help but received none.
- Fifty-six per cent of people who needed help received that support from family members.
- More than 600,000 working-age adults with disabilities (about 25 per cent) needed aids and devices to address issues of seeing, hearing, speaking, mobility or the use of hands and arms.
- Roughly 70 per cent of those needing aids and devices reported that they did not need more than they were using, compared to 15 per cent who reported needing more than they currently received and another 15 per cent who reported needing such items but having none.
- Approximately 25 per cent of Canadians with disabilities who relied on income support programs cited loss of additional supports as a reason for not looking for paid employment.

Family members play a central role in the provision of disability supports. The importance of family can be even more pronounced in rural and northern remote areas where formal supports are not as readily available. For Aboriginal cultures in particular, the role of families and the community is central to the concept and delivery of disability supports.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities, particularly those living in northern and remote areas, face particularly severe challenges in the area of disability supports. These challenges often go beyond access to technical supports. For example, where there are poorly maintained road systems, it can be very difficult for wheelchair users to travel about in their communities; having to remain inside their homes can lead to isolation, loneliness and depression.

Meeting the Disability Supports Challenge

The 1998 *In Unison* framework identified three objectives for the future development of disability supports: accessibility, portability, and an individual focus.

Accessibility
For supports to be accessible, they need to be affordable, available and appropriate for the needs of the individual. Across Canada, there are disparities in the availability of supports. Aboriginal people report a lack of supports tailored to their needs.

The complex array of disability supports programs and the variety

of supports providers — including government departments, non-profit organizations and others — can also affect access to programs. Individuals often need to tap into a number of different programs to get all the supports they need. Matching individual needs with eligibility criteria that vary from one program to the next is also challenging. For some individuals, getting information about the range of programs available is the first step to gaining better access to disability supports.

The costs of disability supports also have implications for access. In 1991, 35 per cent of working-age adults with disabilities had non-reimbursed out-of-pocket disability related expenses (HALS, 1991).

Portability and Continuity

Portability — or continuity — means that people have continued access to comparable supports when they make transitions across life situations (such as from school to work) or geographic locations (such as moving from one community or province to another). When supports have continuity, people with disabilities find it easier to increase their social and economic independence.

Disability supports are often tied to eligibility for income support, employment or educational programs. This creates disincentives for people who want to make a transition. In addition, supports often are not portable from one province or territory to another, and sometimes even within a province or territory.

It is widely recognized that, in an ideal situation, the individual would receive the supports they need or funding to purchase them regardless of their enrolment in other programs.

Individual Focus

Supports that are provided with an individual focus are flexible, responsive to individual needs, and provide persons with disabilities with maximum control over their provision.

Many programs across Canada now provide some supports through a form of financing called self-managed or individualized funding. Through a variety of different arrangements, consumers are provided with the funding to manage their own supports, such as the hiring and management of attendant or respite services. Individualized funding allows greater self-determination, choice and control for the people directly affected by the service. It also allows for greater tailoring of services to meet individual needs.

The involvement of family and advocates in service provision can help increase the independence of the individual, especially for persons with developmental disabilities. Support to family caregivers can often prevent a crisis and the need for more expensive interventions.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities have observed self-management models and have expressed interest in developing similar systems. However, in Aboriginal communities, there is a lack of trained home care workers and attendants. Aboriginal people also point to the unavailability of respite care and a lack of services for children with disabilities in many Aboriginal communities.

Opportunities for Further Progress

Persons with disabilities and governments agree that disability supports are key to full citizenship, and that the important issues for attention are accessibility, portability and continuity, and individual focus. In the next section on effective practices, a number of initiatives focused on these issues are highlighted.

Most of the effective practices stories demonstrate the importance of strong partnerships — between governments, community organizations, employers, learning institutions, and persons with disabilities. Partnerships need to be built and sustained, and people with disabilities and their organizations must be part of the discussions that lead to solutions. It is particularly important to find ways to involve Aboriginal people with disabilities and others who face multiple barriers to full participation.

The effective practices stories at the end of this chapter demonstrate the principle that disability support initiatives will be more successful if they respond to, and are tailored to, the individual needs of clients.

A number of initiatives are underway to address issues of portability and accessibility. The separation of eligibility for disability supports from eligibility for other programs is a key issue. Building disability supports into mainstream programs, such as education, training, and employment helps people with disabilities participate more fully, particularly when supports are provided in ways that recognize the varying cultural needs of people with disabilities.

For Aboriginal persons with disabilities, a culturally sensitive approach to providing disability supports is crucial. This needs to take into account the holistic context of family and community and the connection to their own people. Métis, Inuit and First Nations people, on and off reserve, stress the importance of programs and services that are designed, developed and delivered by, and for, people of their own communities.

One of the barriers to improving supports is a lack of data on what the needs are, whether they are being met, variation in demand, costs and out-of-pocket expenses. The Government of Canada announced in Budget 2000 that funds would be available for a Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS) in 2001. Along with other research on disability that is being supported through funding from the 2000 federal budget, the 2001 HALS will provide important information for all sectors to help develop solutions to disability supports issues. Members of the disability community have expressed willingness to take an active role in conducting qualitative and quantitative research in this area.

Many disability advocates and organizations have also called for a refundable disability tax credit that would reimburse individuals for more of their actual out-of-pocket disability-related costs. Such a scheme could make it easier for people with low incomes to purchase disability supports. Some disability advocates have also recommended the establishment of national standards and a national disability supports program as a way of addressing portability and equity of access.

Some disability advocates have called on governments to provide more incentives and direct funding to enhance accessibility. In addition, advocates have recommended amendments to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and more funding to provincial and territorial human rights commissions so that they can promote and protect the rights of people with disabilities to access public services.

Effective Practices

Across Canada, there are numerous examples of how governments, community agencies and private businesses are enhancing the accessibility, portability and individualized focus of disability supports.

Providing individualized funding and support

Manitoba Health Home Care Program

In 1991, Manitoba Health initiated a two-year self-managed care pilot program, which was successfully expanded in 1995 into a care option for adults with disabilities. A second option, launched in 1999, makes self-managed care available to the families of adults with disabilities. Both programs allow individuals to hire, train and manage their care requirements independently.

The Independent Living Resource Centre in Winnipeg was actively involved in establishing the program and now plays a program support role. Darlene Marcoux is the Independent Living Resource Centre's Self-Managed Care co-ordinator and she is self-managing her own disability supports arrangements. She works full-time, is raising an 18-year-old daughter, and attends night school two evenings a week to pursue studies in volunteer management. Darlene says: "This program has had a terrific impact on my life. Having the flexibility to hire my own staff means that I can make changes to my care schedule at a moment's notice. I also experience far less staff turnover, which means I spend less time orienting new people. Without this program, I'm not sure I would have made the decision to pursue studies in the evening."

Neil Squire Foundation

The Neil Squire Foundation, a national organization with headquarters in British Columbia, works to develop adaptive devices and alternative methods of computer access for persons with major physical challenges. Computer interfaces, mouth-operated computer joysticks,

+1

environmental control switches, audiovisual note-taking devices and brain-computer interfaces are examples of the devices they develop.

The foundation also offers programs that include literacy and math upgrading, computer training and Creative Employment Options. The latter is a comprehensive, customized pre-employment readiness program in which staff members design individual programs that allow clients to expand their skills and knowledge in computer applications, adaptive technology, and vocational preparation. The program is client-focused, rather than program-driven, and benefits from a strongly committed staff, many of whom have a disability themselves.

Alberta's Persons with Developmental Disabilities Initiative

Persons with Developmental Disabilities is a community-governed, province-wide organization in Alberta that is a leader in supporting adults with developmental disabilities to live in the community. Governed by provincial and community boards, the organization provides people with supports based on their individual needs, including community living supports, employment supports, community access supports and specialized supports.

Persons with Developmental Disabilities supports about 7,500 people, most of whom live in the community. About 3,000 of these people receive individual funding that allows them to purchase their own supports. These supports range from a few hours of assistance per week to 24-hour support. Persons with Developmental Disabilities has given Alberta a reputation for providing cutting-edge services to citizens with developmental disabilities.

Effective Practices

Enhancing access to disability supports

Northwest Territories Study Grant

A new study grant, offered to students in the Northwest Territories, provides an example of how governments are offering direct grants to individuals to offset the cost of disability-related supports.

Beginning in July 2000, full- and part-time post secondary students with disabilities in the Northwest Territories were eligible to apply for study grants to cover direct costs associated with their disabilities. These could include fees for tutors, interpreters, note takers and attendant services, as well as transportation and equipment expenses. The program is designed to complement the Canada Study Grant.

British Columbia's Adult Services Program

The Adult Services Program is a joint project of British Columbia's Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security and the Vancouver School Board. Through this program, adults with disabilities who are post-secondary students and/or clients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services are eligible for one-stop special technology support.

Adaptive technology is managed in a 'loan bank.' The services provided by Adult Services Program include adaptive technology assessment and consultation, loans of adaptive technology and training on the use of technology equipment.

Effective Practices

Ontario's Community AccessAbility Program

The Community AccessAbility program was established in March 1999, to encourage not-for-profit, non-government, community-based organizations in Ontario to enter into partnerships with local businesses, service organizations, and persons with disabilities, to make their community more accessible. As of March 1, 2000, the program had funded 46 projects involving 154 community partners and over 3,300 persons with disabilities, 34 events and delivery of 28 workshops. It resulted in the production of 24,500 pieces of information.

Nova Scotia's Community ACCESS-ability Program

The Community ACCESS-ability program funds the addition of wheelchair ramps, automatic doors and other improvements to community facilities all over Nova Scotia. It does this by providing grants to municipalities and non-profit organizations. By the summer of 2000, 28 projects had been approved.

The four-year, $1.2 million program was developed in consultation with community and advocacy groups. The government contributes two dollars for every dollar raised in the community.

Charlie MacDonald, executive director of the Disabled Persons Commission, said: "These 28 projects are a good first step. One in five Nova Scotians has a disability, and having equal access to public buildings and facilities is their fundamental right."

Effective Practices

Task Force on Access to Information for Print-Disabled Canadians

In June 2000, Mr. Roch Carrier, National Librarian of Canada, and Dr. Euclid Herie, President and CEO of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, formed a Task Force on Access to Information for Print-disabled Canadians, to address the need for inclusive public policy and a plan to ensure accessible information.

The Task Force, through six open consultations and written submissions from consumers, consumer groups, service producers and service providers, has recognized the importance of disability supports to ensure the principle of full citizenship and access to employment, learning and social programs. Submissions have endorsed the need for Canadian alternate format materials, accessible Web standards, a network of production and service centres, and have recommended a central repository for electronic texts.

Improving access to supports for people living in under-serviced areas

Inclusive Transportation Initiative

In Nova Scotia, a pilot inclusive transportation initiative is helping to provide transportation services to persons with disabilities who live in under-serviced areas.

Dial-A-Ride Nova Scotia allows people to pre-book an "inclusive ride" to anywhere in the province as long as a service provider is available. The pilot project is providing transportation services to all members of the community, whether they are people with disabilities or not. The pilot project is now operating 10 to12 vehicles in four counties. Partnerships between provincial, federal, municipal and community agencies are a key feature of this initiative.

Effective Practices

Building networks at regional and national levels

Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network

In 1989, a group of British Columbia families established the Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, a non-profit charity created by, and for, families that have a relative with a disability. It helps families to investigate alternatives for guardianship, explore contribution opportunities, find ways to reduce isolation and loneliness, and consider avenues that will ensure their children have adequate assets.

Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network has also developed partnerships with organizations that are open to finding new ways of doing business, including working with organizations that are open to social entrepreneurial opportunities. For example, it established a partnership with VanCity Credit Union to develop services that were more responsive to persons with disabilities and their families.

Al Etmanski, one of the group's co-founder says, "It was a win-win situation. VanCity saw the chance to increase its business by tailoring services for this population, and we saw an opportunity to raise funds working with their Employee Assistance Program and members. Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network continues to reap benefits from this alliance. We're now looking for other alliances that allow us to develop this type of leveraging strategy."

National Educational Association of Disabled Students

Information on financial assistance for students with disabilities is a critical resource that contributes to accessibility. The National Education Association of Disabled Students maintains a national directory of financial assistance programs on-line, including scholarships and bursaries from voluntary organizations. EdLink allows people to connect to disability service centres or special needs offices at 120 campuses nationwide.

The National Educational Association of Disabled Students also provides a variety of other assistance to students with disabilities, ranging from leadership development projects to conferences, a widely used web site and advocacy on post-secondary campuses.

Effective practices by and for Aboriginal people

National Aboriginal Clearing/Connecting House on Disability Issues

This organization provides information to Aboriginal people with disabilities to support their efforts to achieve labour market attachment and full citizenship in their communities and larger society. It does this by developing, maintaining and making available a database of information on programs, services and organizations that can assist Aboriginal people with disabilities. Staff members are active in providing community workshops on Aboriginal disability issues, and the organization disseminates information on a national level to Aboriginal people with disabilities, as well as to practitioners in the disability field. It also conducts research on disability issues of common interest to Aboriginal communities.

Métis National Council Reference Group on Ability Issues

The Métis National Council recognizes the issues that Métis people with a disability face in Canadian society and in November 1995, issued a decree that a national strategy be developed in which Métis people with a disability receive culturally-specific, community-based services.

Following this decision, the Métis National Council and the Canadian Paraplegic Association established a partnership agreement to develop a pilot project that would provide for the transfer of vocational and rehabilitative counselling skills to Métis people with a disability to act as peer counsellors to their communities. This resulted in the initial formation of the Métis National Council Reference Group on Ability Issues. The Canadian Paraplegic Association furthered this partnership with the intention to provide culturally appropriate services to Métis people with a disability and the devolution of some services to the Aboriginal organizations. Notwithstanding this agreement, the parties agree there is a need to increase the capacity of Métis communities to deliver these services by, for and to Métis people with disabilities.

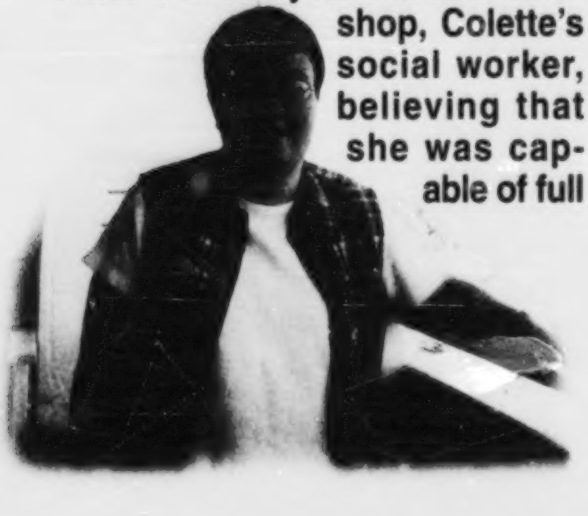
In January 1999, Human Resources Development Canada provided funding to the Métis National Council for the project entitled, "Empowerment: The Key to Better Living for Métis People with Disabilities." The focus of the project was the developmental processes for the formulation of a national strategy for Métis people with disabilities. A direct result of this project was the formation of the Métis National Council Reference Group on Ability Issues. Its membership comprises individuals who are appointed by the President of the provincial governing member associations of the Métis National Council. This forum provides a Métis grassroots perspective on programming and services for Métis people with a disability.

3. EMPLOYMENT

Colette Lacroix's Story

Employment in the mainstream labour market can enhance the independence and participation of people with disabilities. While people with disabilities have made progress in moving from sheltered employment to community-based employment, continued efforts are needed to support this growth. The benefits of doing so are clearly articulated by those who have witnessed the changes that have taken place in Colette Lacroix's life over recent years.

Diagnosed with a developmental disability, Colette attended a segregated high school classroom and, upon reaching adulthood, worked at a sheltered workshop. After thirteen years at the workshop, Colette's social worker, believing that she was capable of full employment with a community employer, worked with Colette and her family to obtain supported employment services. A local employment agency for people with disabilities, Network South Enterprises Inc., was introduced to Colette and helped her get involved in a range of work experiences to assess her abilities and provide her with exposure to competitive employment.



For the past eight years, Colette has been employed as a clerk in the Communications Department of the University of Manitoba. Network South Enterprises provided assistance during her transition period, including employer support and on-the-job coaching. Colette earns a competitive salary, including benefits.

Mona Lacroix, Colette's sister, is quick to point out that along with the excellent array of employment services such as those offered by Network South Enterprises, family must play an active role in supporting a person with a disability to maximize their potential.

Issues and Challenges: Employment

For many people with disabilities, paid or voluntary work — whether full or part-time — is a key to independence and full participation in their communities. For this reason, employment is one of the three *In Unison* building blocks to achieving full citizenship. Unfortunately, it is common for people with disabilities to encounter barriers to entering or staying in the labour market. This is particularly true for women with disabilities, and Aboriginal persons with disabilities face even greater employment challenges.

This chapter looks at key indicators drawn from the 1996 Census to describe the employment situation of persons with disabilities. The chapter also includes an analysis of employment indicators for persons with disabilities over time, by drawing on the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID). The SLID provides additional data for 1993 through 1997, which shows the effects of the

Some Key Employment Indicators

- In 1995, 43 per cent of persons with disabilities were participating in the labour market – about half the percentage of people without disabilities.
- Only 14 per cent of women with disabilities worked full-time for the full year, and 62 per cent did not work at any point in the year. More than half of men with disabilities were without paid work for the full year, compared to less than one in ten men without disabilities.
- In 1995, the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities was 16 per cent, compared to nine per cent for persons without disabilities. The rate was highest among young Aboriginal men (15-34) with disabilities, at 34 per cent.
- Between 1990 and 1995, there was a decrease in full-time, full-year employment overall. For people with disabilities, this resulted in a complete loss of work for many people, particularly men.

early 1990s recession on persons with disabilities.

Labour market participation

Labour market participation refers to people actively in the labour force, whether employed full or part-time, or unemployed and seeking work.

1988 WINNIPEG
WINNIPEG

Indicators reveal that labour market participation is a key issue for persons with disabilities. In 1995, people with disabilities were less than half as likely as persons without disabilities to be participating in the labour market. The rate was lowest for women with disabilities. These low participation rates represent a loss of potential to Canadian society as a whole as well as a barrier to full inclusion and independence for persons with disabilities.

In the 1991 Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS), persons with disabilities identified lack of job accommodation and flexible hours, loss of supports and income, and inadequate training as some of the factors that prevented them from participating in the labour market.

Impact of education on participation

Overall, people with higher levels of education are more likely to participate in the paid labour market and educational attainment among persons with disabilities has been increasing. The 1996

Census clearly shows the strong correlation between educational attainment and labour force participation rates among persons with disabilities.

- Of women with disabilities who had a university degree, 66 percent were in the labour market, three times the rate of women with disabilities with less than a high school education;
- Thirty-six percent of men with disabilities who had less than a high school education were participating in the labour market, just over half the rate for university graduates; and
- Seven percent of working age men with disabilities, compared to 17 percent of men without disabilities, had completed a university degree.

Employment and unemployment

For those persons with disabilities who do participate in the labour market, indicators show that they experience disadvantages compared to those without disabilities. For example:

- In 1995, people with disabilities were less likely to have full-time, full-year employment than were adults without disabilities;
- Women with disabilities were the least likely of all groups to have worked full-time for the full year and were the most likely to have gone without work all year;
- Aboriginal persons with disabilities were slightly more likely to have been completely without paid work than their non-Aboriginal counterparts, and were more likely to have worked for only part of the year; and
- Overall, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities was almost double that of people without disabilities.

Effects of recession

The recession of the early 1990s had a significant impact on the labour market experience of persons with disabilities. Overall, people with disabilities were hit harder by the recession than were people without disabilities, and recovery was slower for persons with disabilities than for those without. For example:

- Labour market participation by people with disabilities declined to a greater extent than it did for persons without disabilities during the years following the recession. This was most pronounced for older male workers with disabilities, suggesting that many might have entered into early retirement either voluntarily or involuntarily during the recession years;
- Although higher levels of education appear to provide some protection from unemployment, the effect was weaker for persons with disabilities. At every level of educational attainment, persons with disabilities had a higher level of unemployment than did persons without disabilities;
- In the years following the early 1990s recession, people with disabilities found it increasingly difficult to find full-time, full-year work. Although some individuals moved to fewer weeks of work or fewer hours of work per week, the overall trend was a total loss of paid work. For example, in 1990, 44 per cent of men with disabilities had no paid work. This had grown to 52 per cent by 1995;
- While Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons with disabilities experienced a loss of paid work between 1990 and 1995, a slightly greater tendency of Aboriginal people with disabilities to remain in the labour market than other persons with disabilities simply resulted in their experiencing a higher rate of unemployment; and
- The Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) shows that the proportion of persons with disabilities with long spells of unemployment (40 or more weeks) increased beginning after 1993, and peaked in 1995

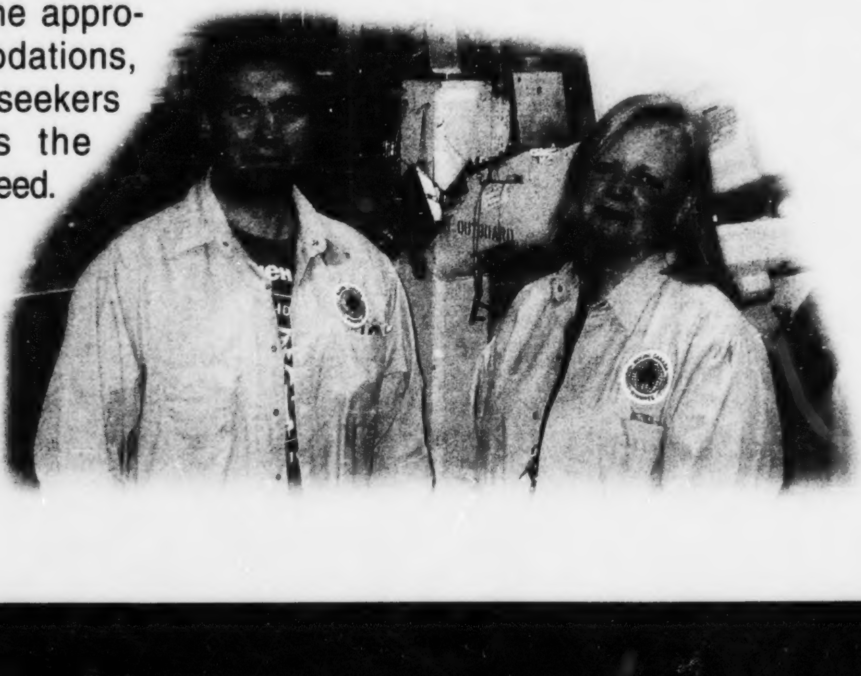
— widening the already significant gap between persons with and without disabilities. While the difference in gap seemed to be narrowing in 1996 and 1997, it had not yet returned to pre-recession levels.

Meeting the Employment Challenge

The *In Unison* vision aims to increase the employability of adults with disabilities, encourage entry or re-entry into the labour market and help promote increased employment and volunteer opportunities. The employment building block depends on access to education and training programs that meet the specific needs of persons with disabilities, making sure jobs are available with the appropriate accommodations, and offering job seekers and employers the information they need.

The 1998 *In Unison* framework outlines five objectives in the area of employment:

- reduce reliance on income support programs;
- promote access to the training programs available to all Canadians;
- increase the availability of work-related supports;
- encourage employers to make appropriate job/workplace accommodation; and
- promote work and volunteer opportunities for persons with disabilities.



In addition, job retention and career enhancement are key issues, as both present considerable challenges to persons with disabilities once they have achieved employment. The needs of persons with very significant employment challenges, including persons with developmental, mental health and multiple disabilities, require particular attention.

Opportunities for Further Progress

All sectors — business, labour, community agencies, persons with disabilities and their advocates — have a role to play in improving the employment situation of persons with disabilities.

For example, helping people with disabilities to increase their participation in the labour market involves efforts at several levels. The effective practices below portray initiatives by governments designed to remove disincentives to employment, and provide flexible support to persons with disabilities who are working to reenter the labour market.

The effective practices also show that employers can be successful in taking a proactive approach to recruiting and maintaining persons with disabilities as part of their skilled workforce. The role of front-line service providers and community organizations in working with persons with disabilities, employers, and government agencies to identify opportunities and facilitate workplace accommodation is also highlighted.

Research has shown that education and training are linked to success in employment. Enhanced access to education, training and skills development, through disability supports and accommodation in learning institutions, can help build this important bridge to full inclusion through employment. Assisting young people with disabilities to make successful transitions to the workplace is also a key element, as experience with cooperative education programs, internships, and career-related summer job initiatives have shown.

Persons with disabilities have pointed out that a consumer-driven approach to training and vocational rehabilitation initiatives permits the fine-tuning that is needed for participants to proceed at their own rate and with the full range of interventions they require. The effective practices examples throughout this report underscore the value of this approach. Improved labour market information to support individual planning, and improved marketing of the hiring of persons with disabilities are examples of areas well suited to broad cross-sector cooperation.

Aboriginal persons with disabilities have stressed the importance of training and employment programs that are designed, developed and delivered in culturally relevant ways. Specific examples of such initiatives are also described in the effective practices section.

Persons with disabilities and disability advocates have called for a comprehensive labour market strategy that necessarily involves collaboration by employers, unions, community groups, learning institutions, as well as governments and persons with disabilities. The effective practices demonstrate how well such collaboration on employment for persons with disabilities can work.

Effective Practices

Many employers, governments and others have developed innovative initiatives to address the employment needs of people with disabilities. A review of these effective practices reveals key themes that can be useful in developing future initiatives.

A strong role for employers

Boeing Canada

Boeing has been hiring members of the deaf community since shortly after its composite manufacturing plant opened in Winnipeg in 1971, and today employs 25 deaf workers who are making a significant and positive impact on Boeing's corporate culture.

In 1999, the company created a Deaf Issues Committee to improve communication among deaf and hearing people and raise awareness among Winnipeg Division employees at all levels in the company about the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing employees. Boeing Winnipeg also cooperates with other agencies to promote the hiring of persons with disabilities.

"The key to a company's competitive advantage is its people," says Boeing Canada Technology President Jim Sawyer. "I believe that a diverse workforce gives us the depth, the skills, the knowledge and the advantage needed to excel in a global community. Our deaf employees have added to the richness of our diversity for many years."

Royal Bank Financial Group

An 'Employees with Disabilities Advisory Council' was first conceived by the Royal Bank Financial Group in recognition of the fact that employees could provide the greatest expertise and first-hand experience in strengthening the company's ability to employ and provide services to persons with disabilities.

Effective Practices

The Council has researched how the Royal Bank Financial Group could become an employer of choice for people with disabilities, and a number of their recommendations already have been implemented. For example, to help overcome the myth that workplace accommodation for people with disabilities is costly, the company established the ‘I Make it Barrier Free’ program. This program authorizes managers and employees to spend up to $3,000 per person to conduct workplace assessments and purchase whatever is needed to accommodate an employee’s disability.

The Council also looked at ways of assisting the Royal Bank Financial Group to strengthen its ability to provide services to customers with disabilities. “We’ve been held up by other financial institutions as having developed a best practice,” reports Christine Suski, Manager of Strategic Initiatives. “Several other Canadian financial institutions and businesses have followed our lead and established their own councils.”

Palliser and its partners

Palliser, a Winnipeg-based international furniture manufacturer, has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to hiring individuals with developmental disabilities and to working in partnership with local non-profit employment agencies, Work and Social Opportunities and more recently, Sturgeon Creek Enterprises LifeWorks.

Currently, there are seventy-seven participants from Work and Social Opportunities’ Vocational Services and Employment Services Programs working in six Palliser divisions in Winnipeg, and LifeWorks provides employees with developmental disabilities with job coaching, modification of the work environment, work training, and employment development, placement and follow up supports and services.

Ron Koslowsky, Palliser's Director of Human Resources, says, "Palliser recognized that it is a challenge for disabled people to get into the workforce but through the expertise of organizations like Work and Social Opportunities and LifeWorks, we have been able to see a number of these people become a vibrant and valued part of Palliser's community."

Building public-private partnerships

Team Work Cooperative

Established in 1997, Team Work Cooperative Ltd. is a collective of 20 shareholder organizations, such as the Nova Scotia Community College and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, working together to ensure persons with disabilities have full access to the Nova Scotia labour market. It achieves this goal by facilitating cooperation and collaboration between employment service providers that work with persons with disabilities. Team Work's cooperative structure allows members to profit from others' knowledge of available programs and by pooling resources, including staff, office space, equipment and knowledge. Both provincial and federal governments support Team Work Cooperative's work.

Team Work is also taking action to improve the portability of supports for people with disabilities making the transition to work. Executive Director Veronica McNeil says, "Employers were initially attracted because the program provided them with an efficient way of meeting their own employment equity policies. We're finding that the experience can be so positive that employers start looking to hire people with disabilities through their regular employment stream. They come to see that employment barriers were in their own minds."

Effective Practices

Skills Training Partnership

The Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work developed the Skills Training Partnership in 1991. It is based on partnerships among community, government and business sectors and focuses on providing training to people facing barriers to employment and making sure that employers can find individuals with disabilities who have the required skills or experience.

Training is customized to meet the specific needs of the individual and the employer. Employer partners commit themselves by signing a contract before hiring project graduates into permanent positions. The managing agency works to make sure appropriate job accommodation is made and stays involved during the transition from training to employment, delivering expert assistance to help the employer and the worker adapt to their new situation.

Senior executives act as champions for the partnership and send strong messages to all employees. Evelyn Gold, national Skills Training Partnership coordinator, says, "It's important that all parties understand that the program takes a holistic approach to employment and that it demands time and resources. But the bottom line is that 85 per cent of our program graduates are retained by their host employers."

Comité d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre (CAMO)

CAMO is a unique partnership made up of Quebec employers, the labour movement, governments, service providers and the disability community. It empowers the disability community through a decision-making partnership with the labour market community. CAMO focuses on sharing knowledge and improving awareness among employers and service providers about the needs of persons with disabilities.

Effective Practices

This partnership applies a disability lens to employment issues by ensuring that employment related initiatives in all sectors respect the specific needs of persons with disabilities. The partnership also promotes a strong regional and local role in the implementation of the *Politique active du marché du travail* (Active Labour Market Policy) in a way that is inclusive of persons with disabilities, proactive and far-reaching. CAMO pursues long-term solutions such as training, improved access and awareness.

Ensuring equal access to employment opportunities

Nunavut Future of Work Conference

The Future of Work conference, held in Iqaluit in 1998, built the principle of full inclusion of persons with disabilities into its design and its content. The conference was not about disability, but by being fully accessible, and providing a range of disability supports, it demonstrated that people with disabilities could be full participants in the conference — and the workplace. For example, in focusing on opportunities for a universally accessible communication network, the conference provided a showcase for people to develop awareness of how technology can be used to serve everyone.

The leaders of Nunavut were able to send a clear message to people in communities that all people are valued and will have opportunities to contribute to the future of Nunavut.

Effective Practices

New Brunswick's Equal Employment Opportunities Program

The Equal Employment Opportunities program was established in 1982, to provide Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities and visible minority persons with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities in the New Brunswick Public Service.

The Equal Employment Opportunities program's primary objective is to provide a more balanced representation of qualified target group persons in the Civil Service. This goal is achieved by placing individuals into term positions of up to two years, twenty-week job experience opportunities or 10-week student summer employment. All three components of the program are designed to provide career-related work experience.

Visible Abilities Registry

The New Brunswick Department of Training and Employment Development operates the Visible Abilities Registry, an electronic registry of individuals with disabilities who are trained and ready to work. The program serves as a direct employment screening and referral service for employers, and once a prospective worker and employer are matched, an on-the-job training subsidy can be negotiated.

While the program began with a focus on private sector jobs, it has since been expanded to cover recruitment for federal government jobs under an agreement with the federal government.

The department's Employment Services for Persons with Disabilities program is also working with Human Resources Development Canada and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to establish a specialized Client Resource Centre to assist persons with visual and learning disabilities to conduct job searches and get access to related services.

Conference Board of Canada Partnership Project

In 1999, the Conference Board of Canada, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, launched a project to gain an understanding of the policies, practices and needs of employers in the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce. While diversity overall is the project theme, there is a strong emphasis focusing on employers' needs vis-à-vis recruiting and retaining people with disabilities.

This two-year multi-phased project will provide useful information and learning resources to assist employers and employment-related disability organizations to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Effective practices by and for Aboriginal people

Heightening Awareness Leading to Opportunity (HALO) Project

This project, sponsored by the British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society, provides pre-employment, pre-vocational and work-related programs and services to Aboriginal persons with disabilities in three pilot sites, both rural and urban. Partners include three tribal councils and three community colleges, which are supported by the federal government.

The HALO project has hired Aboriginal people with disabilities to manage the program, and serve as mentors and role models. The partnerships help to build capacity on disability issues at the Aboriginal community level, while also ensuring the appropriate cultural environments for learning, support, and eventual employment.

Effective Practices

Aboriginal Development Network Enhancement Recruitment Business

A business started by a Métis entrepreneur (who has a disability), operating in Alberta has filled an identified gap by Métis people, by building intervention capacity for Aboriginal persons living with a disability. The Aboriginal Development Network Enhancement Recruitment Business designs and develops enhancements for program and services specifically supporting Aboriginal persons with disabilities. Programming builds self-awareness through Aboriginal spiritual development and adds appropriate Aboriginal content.

The Aboriginal Development Network Enhancement Recruitment Business will also take existing programs or services already operating and assess if they are sensitive and accessible for Aboriginal persons with disabilities. In addition to the program development work, it provides one-on-one peer counselling and advocacy for individuals and organizations serving Aboriginal persons with disabilities.

Aboriginal People with Disabilities Program

The Aboriginal Disabled Self Help Group was founded in August 1996, "to advocate, support, and strive for quality services to be provided for Aboriginal persons with disabilities in the city of Winnipeg." Working in partnership with the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resources Development, and with funding from Human Resources Development Canada, the group has developed a culturally appropriate employment counselling/placement program to serve the needs of Aboriginal people with disabilities. By working together, the two organizations are able to support Aboriginal persons with disabilities to participate fully as members of the Aboriginal community. Not only do they make connections with each other, with prospective employers and training opportunities, and other disability organizations, they also continue to encourage more Aboriginal-specific services for Aboriginal persons with disabilities.

Grand River Employment and Training and Special Services for Special People Partnership

Grand River Employment and Training is a community agency that was created after Aboriginal communities and Human Resources Development Canada came together to develop Aboriginal-specific training and employment programs. Since its inception in 1993, the agency has worked to provide employment for the Onkwehon:we of the Grand River Territory.

Grand River Employment and Training delivers employment and training programs to Six Nations community members both on and off reserve, and also recognizes and supports the strong cultural and traditional beliefs of the community, which are reflected in its programs and services. It recognized that the development of programming for Aboriginal people with a disability would be a unique opportunity for culturally appropriate programming for the integration of all community members into the labour market. The agency has developed and integrated a labour market program specifically for the developmentally challenged adults of the community through a relationship with the Special Services for Special People program, which has been in existence since 1980. The ultimate goal of the partnership is to provide a holistic and supportive environment that empowers and supports developmentally challenged individuals in their efforts to contribute and participate in daily and community life.

The Grand River Employment and Training — Special Services for Special People partnership is a prime example of the effectiveness of programming for Aboriginal people with disabilities, which has been developed and delivered to the community by Aboriginal people.

4. INCOME

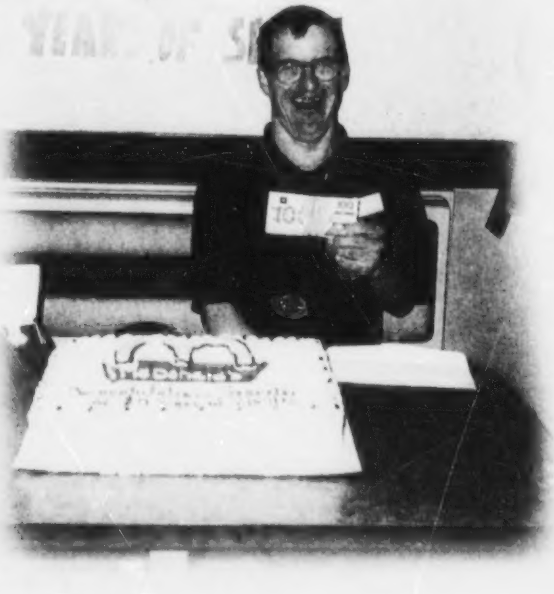
Francis Shcaan's Story

September 8, 2000, was an important day for Francis Shcaan. On that day, McDonald's hosted a celebration honouring Francis's 20th year with the company. During this time Francis has "worked at all but one of the Saskatoon McDonald's." He has worked in all areas of the restaurant and was recently promoted to the grill area. Francis particularly enjoys working with staff and customers and is proud of the work he does.

Francis, who has Down's Syndrome, lives in a group home and pays $410 rent each month. The rest of his salary is his to use as he chooses.

The Benchmarking Program, which separates the delivery of income supports from the delivery of disability supports, has made a difference in Francis' life. Before the program was introduced, Francis could not keep more than $175 of his monthly salary. The rest of his earnings were used to pay for the support he received in the group home where he lived at the time.

Francis is proud of his financial independence and plans to invest his anniversary bonus.



Issues and Challenges: Income

To fully participate in society, people must have enough income to adequately meet their needs. There are different ways of measuring what adequacy and low income mean. Some people believe low income means lacking enough income to buy the basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter and clothing. Others take the view that it means not having enough income to be active in their communities. Still others believe that low income falls somewhere in between. This report does not attempt to establish a single definition of the term.

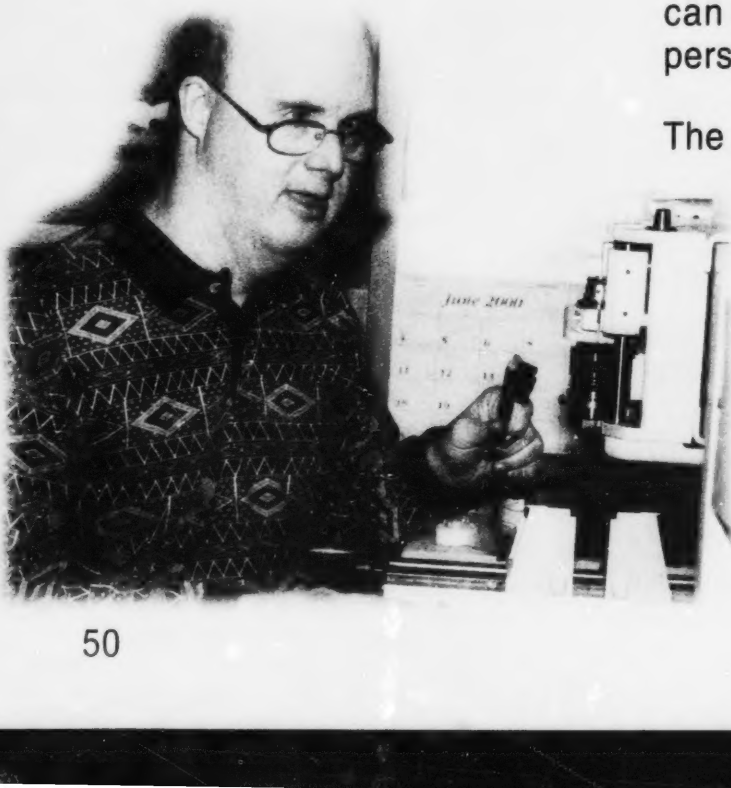
The costs associated with disability supports play a big role in determining how much income a person with disabilities requires to meet their basic needs or participate fully in their community. Access to funding for disability supports is often directly related to

Some Key Income Indicators

- In 1997, working-age adults with disabilities were more than twice as likely to be living on low income than were adults without disabilities (26 per cent of adults with disabilities were living below the low-income cut-off, as compared to 11 per cent of those without disabilities).
- The depth of low income was also greater for people with disabilities, with 17 per cent of adults with disabilities more than 25 per cent below the low-income cut-off, as compared to 6 per cent of those without disabilities.
- Working-age men with disabilities were more than six times as likely to rely on a government income support program, as were men without disabilities. Women with disabilities were almost three times as likely to rely on government income support programs as were women without disabilities.
- Men with disabilities were only half as likely as were men without disabilities to rely on earnings as their largest source of income.

the individual's sources of income. With the exception of Canada Pension Plan Disability, people whose main source of income comes from government income support programs tend to have some of the costs of disability supports covered by government, as this is considered to be one of their income needs.

Unfortunately, those who are participating in the labour market do not usually get the same kind of assistance, even if their income is very low. Employed people who pay for their own disability supports must generate a higher level of income than their counterparts who do not have disabilities in order to have the same standard of living.



Income for people with disabilities may come from employment earnings, private insurance, pensions, investments, government income support programs (such as social assistance, Worker's Compensation, Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan Disability) or some combination of these types of income.

There is widespread agreement that it is desirable for employment to be the greatest possible source of income, as reduced dependence on government income support can enhance citizenship and a person's sense of self-reliance.

The difficulties many people with disabilities face in entering or staying in the labour market have a profound impact on income levels, as does their more limited access to post-secondary education and training and the difficulty they tend to experience in progressing to higher paying jobs.

The reality is that some people who have disabilities are not able to support themselves sufficiently, or at all. The income safety net must reward individual work effort to the greatest extent possible, while ensuring that financial assistance is available where it is needed most.

Sources of income

Analysis of indicators shows that persons with disabilities are only half as likely to get the largest part of their income from earnings and almost four times as likely to rely on government transfers than are persons without disabilities. In 1997, for example, less than 40 per cent of persons with disabilities had earnings as their major source of income, compared to 78 per cent of persons without disabilities. This figure had been even lower in 1995, when only 33 per cent of persons with disabilities identified earnings as their largest source of income, compared to 76 per cent of persons without disabilities.

As Canada's economic situation improved, the percentage of people with disabilities relying on government transfers decreased slightly (from 49% in 1995 to 46% in 1997) and earnings played an increasing role (from 33% to 40%).

Persons with disabilities who are unable to maintain employment as a result of their disabilities may qualify for government earning replacement programs. For example, the Canada Pension Plan replaces a portion of earnings lost as a result of a disability and is designed to be integrated with other disability income programs. Worker's Compensation plans replace between 75 and 90 per cent of net earnings. Canada Pension Plan benefits can be supplemented by long-term disability insurance plans, which typically can replace up to 70 per cent of lost earnings. Persons with disabilities who do not have enough income from these sources or persons who are unable to participate in the labour market may qualify for provincial or territorial social assistance.

Income Levels[3]

Persons with disabilities tend to have lower incomes than those without disabilities. Persons with disabilities who are employed tend to have lower earnings than persons without disabilities. In 1997, the depth of low income experienced by adults with disabilities — how far they were below the low-income line — was much greater than for people without disabilities.

Between 1993 and 1997, following the early 1990s recession, persons with disabilities experienced low income more severely than did persons without disabilities — by every measure and in every year. However, there was relatively little change in this situation during the period following the recession, despite large employment earnings losses by adults with disabilities. This suggests that the taxation system and social safety net programs had some success in softening the impact of difficult economic times.

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[3] See Appendix A for information on the income measures used in this report.

Meeting the Income Challenge

Existing income programs and policies for persons with disabilities were established in the past and reflect past realities and attitudes. The 1998 *In Unison* framework reflects a new direction that governments wish to pursue with income policies and programs for the future. The *In Unison* income building block identifies four objectives:

- encourage economic independence by removing barriers to working;
- detach eligibility for disability supports from income programs;
- improve access and reduce administrative duplication through greater coordination of income programs; and
- ensure the availability of income supports for periods during which individuals are not able to support themselves.

Opportunities for Further Progress

The income available to a person with a disability is directly related to the cost and availability of disability supports and to the person's ability to earn income through employment. Successful income strategies focus on the inter-relationship of these elements and others such as education and training.

Definitions and attitudes are a factor. For example, some special disability income support programs, supplements and pensions have eligibility criteria requiring people to be classified as "unemployable." In recent years, governments have worked to provide more flexibility for persons with disabilities to participate in the labour market as they are able.

The transition to employment is a key point. Persons with disabilities have pointed out that a continued base of income and disability supports is crucial during transition to employment, so people can become established in the labour market without facing financial uncertainty or undue hardship because of the cost of their disability supports. Some of the effective practices featured in the next section illustrate the difference that transition support can make as people move toward economic independence.

A related issue, discussed earlier in this report, and again illustrated by some of the effective practices, is the advantage of separating eligibility for disability supports from eligibility for income support programs. Having the assurance of disability supports regardless of whether one is involved in employment, learning, or other activities enhances opportunities and contributes to the goal of full inclusion.

Better coordination of income support programs and improved communication between programs, employers and others have been highlighted as key issues. Transition provisions for people moving from one program to another, better and more accessible information about the programs, and better coordination to meet the needs of those who participate in more than one program at a time, are some of the key considerations. The 1998 *In Unison* identifies improved coordination as a key objective, and some examples of initiatives aimed at achieving this are included in the effective practices section.

Disability advocates have called for a nationally integrated income support program for people with disabilities. Governments welcome continued dialogue among all sectors and all Canadians in working together to address income issues for persons with disabilities.

Facilitating transitions to economic independence

Bay St. George Community Employment Corporation
The Bay St. George Community Employment Corporation of Stephenville, Newfoundland, supports people with developmental disabilities in their efforts to participate in self-employment. It began when a private employer in Bay St. George approached the Canada Employment Centre to provide an opportunity for an individual with a severe developmental disability. Ken Caul got the help he needed to start an industrial bolt refurbishing and refinishing business. In succeeding years, Ken has added new services to his company and has expanded his customer base.

Community members rallied around Ken to make sure his efforts would be successful. The Canada Employment Centre tapped into community resources to make sure he had the legal, financial, business and personal support he needed. Ray McIsaac, a director with the Newfoundland Association for Community Living says, "Examples like Ken's demonstrate that in a larger sense, the community adopted the vision that people need to support individuals with disabilities in order to support the economic and social fabric of the society... All supports must be sensitive to opportunities that enable the individual to fully interact with the community. Support should be discreet and enable persons with disabilities to reach their full potential in a community setting. It is essential that the support does not overshadow the individual."

Effective Practices

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)
Alberta's Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program provides a flat-rate benefit outside the welfare system for people with severe disabilities. AISH reduces financial disincentives to seeking employment by providing an income exemption as an incentive for people to find paid work. The program allows for rapid reinstatement, so if a participant leaves the program for work or school they can return during a two-year period without needing to go through medical eligibility again. Individuals manage their own funds, and if they aren't able to do so, a family member may act as financial administrator. AISH provides extended medical benefits and if an AISH recipient earns enough to leave the program, their medical coverage is extended for one year.

Peggy Thiessen, Manager of the AISH program says, "We're telling people that if they're willing to risk working, we're willing to support them. Employment specialists and client support workers are encouraging people to go back to school or to work. We want AISH recipients to take an active part in determining their own course, but we make it clear no one is forcing a course of action on them"

Networking Employment Opportunities Now
Networking Employment Opportunities Now is a regional network in Prince Edward Island that was established to help people with disabilities and people recovering from injuries to find employment. Network members include federal and provincial government agencies and community organizations.

One of the network's initiatives, Rural Outreach Support for Employment, is designed to help persons with disabilities in outlying areas match their job skills with the needs of employers. The program pays for short-term wage subsidies and the services of a job coach who works with local employers to develop long-term career opportunities for clients.

Mette Halley, a worker with Employment Assistance for the Physically Disabled, in Montague, says: "Identifying barriers and partnering with organizations that can work to overcome them has been the network's goal. While the initial job placement may be relatively easy to make, the more difficult task lies in helping the employer, the workplace and the employee to establish a longer-term relationship which meets the expectations of all parties involved."

The Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses

The Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses is a unique provincial organization that assists in the development of small businesses with and for people who have been through the mental health system. The council is an association of businesses that employ more than 800 psychiatric survivors. The council manages several economic initiatives and provides resources to the survivor community. It actively promotes the notion of "real work for real money."

An employee in one of these businesses said, "The reason consumer/survivors are doing this is not just to create successful businesses, it is to rebuild human lives. Survivors are using the economy toward that end, not using the people to build the economy."

Effective Practices

Breaking down barriers to workplace participation

Ontario Disability Support Program

The Ontario Disability Support Program demonstrates an evolution in attitude. People with disabilities are no longer viewed as permanently unemployable. The program recognizes that many people with disabilities can and want to work, and can also assume responsibility for planning their careers and choosing the services and supports they need. The Ontario Disability Support Program has two main components — income support and employment support. A person may be eligible for both types of support, and those who don't require income support may still receive employment support.

The program's Employment Policy Manager Peter Amenta says: "The program has taken the approach that individuals know best what kinds of support they need. The program is designed to approve and provide these supports so the person can prepare for, find or keep a job. We make direct funding available so individuals can purchase the goods and services they need."

Multi-Partner Pilot Project — Returning to Work

Programs designed to meet individuals' needs through employment income increase their likelihood of success when they use a collaborative approach that involves all levels of government, community agencies and the private sector. This was demonstrated through a Canada Pension Plan pilot project in British Columbia: "Returning to Work — Removing the Barriers."

Effective Practices

Blake Williams, Director of the Workers Advisors Branch at the British Columbia Ministry of Labour says, "We recognized that we needed to create a federal and provincial project that included private sector representation in order to really begin making headway. We needed to replace a fractured, uncoordinated safety net with approaches that assist rather than confuse, delay and frustrate people trying to return to work. We wanted to create a fast track that would coordinate services better."

The Return to Work Pilot demonstrated the importance of continuing to provide a base of income and disability supports to assist people during their transition into the labour market. All eleven clients who were accepted into the program found employment at higher than entry-level salaries, despite the fact that they faced significant employment barriers.

Providing opportunities to retain earned income

Saskatchewan Benchmarking Project

The Saskatchewan Benchmarking Project separates the cost of residential services from eligibility for income security. People with disabilities who require residential support and have earned income are expected to pay a rate reflecting standard room and board. Residential support costs in excess of standard room and board are considered a cost of disability and are not income-tested against the individual's earned income. Those who pay the full room and board rate and are no longer eligible for income security, continue to receive supplemental health services that cover their additional medical costs.

Murray Nurse is involved in the on-going administration of the project. He says, "Someone who earns $800 per month can keep the difference once their benchmark amount is paid. As with transportation, telephone and health care initiatives begun in Saskatchewan, the goal is to help people deal with the cost of a disability. For individuals involved in the benchmarking project, any residential costs over $410 are the provincial government's responsibility."

Recognizing the additional costs of disability

New Brunswick's Disability Supplement

In its 2000 budget, the Government of New Brunswick introduced a new provincial benefit for people with disabilities. The Disability Supplement is a yearly financial benefit that is provided to social assistance recipients who have been certified as deaf, blind or 'disabled.' The benefit recognizes that people with disabilities face considerable disability-related expenses and require additional support to purchase these essential goods and services.

The benefit began at $250 per person per year and will increase over four years to $1,000 per person in 2003. There are about 4,000 people in New Brunswick who meet the Disability Supplement's criteria.

5. NEXT STEPS

The development of *In Unison* in 1998 brought together Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments, in consultation with the community, to agree on common goals in working toward a vision of full inclusion for people with disabilities.

This report builds on the 1998 *In Unison* framework by analyzing the issues, discussing some of the potential solutions, and highlighting examples of effective practices in the areas of disability supports, employment, and income for working-age adults with disabilities.

In developing the indicators and gathering the effective practices for this report, governments have strengthened their understanding of issues needing attention and promising directions that are worth exploring. The data highlighted in this report illustrate the disadvantages faced by people with disabilities today. There is much that remains to be done to achieve full citizenship for people with disabilities. Governments recognize that achieving this vision will require all sectors in society to work together in developing a range of solutions. Full inclusion cannot be achieved overnight, nor by the efforts of any one government or agency. Governments understand the importance of setting priorities and moving ahead step-by-step to build on the progress that has already been made.

Since the release of the *In Unison* vision in 1998, governments, individually and together, have been working to improve their programs and services consistent with the *In Unison* principles. At the federal/provincial/territorial level, ministers of social services have identified two initial priorities for further exploration and research. The ministers recently agreed to explore the feasibility of joint work on analyzing labour market needs for persons with disabilities and on assessing the feasibility of a new disability tax benefit to assist with the costs of disability supports. Both of these ideas will require more analysis and research. Input from people with disabilities, disability advocates, aboriginal organizations, experts, employers and others will continue to be an important part of this work.

Federal, provincial, and territorial governments are committed to ongoing discussion and collaboration with the disability community and representatives of Aboriginal organizations. This is an integral element of accountability under the Social Union Framework Agreement and the *In Unison* framework. Governments welcome the input of the community, and recognize the importance of building capacity in the community to enhance their contribution and forge strong partnerships. Through this ongoing dialogue with the disability community, Aboriginal groups and others, governments hope to find new ways of making progress toward full citizenship.

This report has identified some of the difficulties of measuring progress toward the full participation of people with disabilities. Much of the data relating to people with disabilities is nearly a decade old. However, with federal funding now committed to the Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS) for 2001 and other research, there will, in a few years, be more timely data. This will help inform our collective understanding of priorities and solutions. There remains a need for more data on Aboriginal people with disabilities.

The Disability Links web site, being established jointly by the federal, provincial and territorial governments, and planned for launch in the spring of 2001, will be another step toward providing improved information in the area of disabilities. Disability Links will provide a comprehensive directory of internet links to disability related resources.

Governments wish to work with all sectors on issues of disability, to develop solutions and strategies for full inclusion. As the effective practices in this report show, there are promising initiatives underway across sectors that are relevant to the issues of disability supports, employment, and income for persons with disabilities.

In the area of disability supports, it is clear that strong partnerships are needed to address the issues of accessibility, portability and continuity, and individual focus in helping offset costs. Disability supports are key to success with the other building blocks, and in achieving full participation in the community.

In employment, the involvement of a range of sectors in developing solutions is essential, and the importance of education and training must be acknowledged. Governments can reduce disincentives to seek employment, while employers and unions can encourage the hiring of persons with disabilities and support their ongoing success.

Governments recognize that income programs work best when they are flexible and support persons with disabilities in their efforts to enter the labour market. As consideration is given to redesigning those programs in the future, all Canadians need to be involved in understanding and supporting these changes.

In working to address disability issues across sectors, ministers of social services will continue to encourage inclusion for people with disabilities in other social policy agendas, including those related to children as well as seniors. To be successful in supporting people with disabilities in their efforts to achieve full citizenship, Canadians and their governments need to work together at every level.

Reaching the goal of full inclusion is a major challenge for all Canadians. Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments are committed to continued work with members of the disability community, Aboriginal organizations, and other sectors — each of which has a role to play in identifying issues, sharing ideas, and developing solutions. Step by step, working in unison, we can make a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON DATA SOURCES, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Four main survey databases were used to generate the statistics that appear in this report: the 1991 Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS); the Census of the Population (1991 and 1996); the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) 1993 to 1997, and the Aboriginal Peoples Survey (1991).

Census

Conducted every five years, the Census of the Population provides national coverage of the entire Canadian population. It can be used to provide information on the situation of persons with disabilities in the areas of employment and income. Census employment data used in this report refer to the working age population of people aged 15 to 64 years, and excludes full-time students.

Limitations

Reference year

The reference year for the 1996 Census is 1995. This coincides with the height of the effects of the recession experienced during the early 1990s on persons with disabilities. It captures employment and income indicators at a time when they would likely be at one of their lowest points. The 1991 Census, on the other hand, provides a pre-recession view of these indicators. While this might pose some methodological concerns, the data from SLID provide a complement to census data.

Aboriginal population

The Census undercounts the Aboriginal population because of an incomplete enumeration of Indian reserves in both the 1991 and 1996 surveys. The 1996 Census does not include information on 77 Indian reserves and Indian settlements. In 1991, 78 reserves were not enumerated.

The reasons for this exclusion include: enumeration was "not permitted", enumeration was "interrupted", enumeration "occurred too late", or the "quality of data collected was considered inadequate." Statistics Canada estimates that the size of the population affected by these problems might have been about 44,000.

However, the data on Aboriginal persons included in this report are provided only at the national level, thereby reducing the overall impact of the missing data in these 77 locations. The missing data from the Aboriginal population might affect the overall number estimate, but is unlikely to have much of an impact on percentages calculated from these numbers and overall trends observed.

Also, although there were some differences in the sections used to identify Aboriginal people in the 1991 and 1996 Census questionnaires, this report maximizes the identification information available to provide comparable estimates for both Census years.

Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS)

The 1991 HALS remains the most comprehensive source of data on persons with disabilities in Canada. As a post-censal survey, HALS relies on a lengthy series of questions about one's ability to perform various activities of daily living to identify persons with disabilities. As such, it allows the identification of disability type and severity, and levels of unmet need for disability supports.

Limitations

Because the reference year for the data is 1990, the information used from HALS in this report is now quite outdated. But despite this, HALS remains the most recent source of detailed information on disability.

Aboriginal People Survey (APS)

The APS 1991 is a post-censal survey and respondents include persons who identified with at least one Aboriginal group (North American Indian, Métis, Inuit, or a specific group, such as Ojibway, Cree or Inuvialuit) and/or who indicated that they were registered under the Indian Act of Canada.

The APS was planned and developed with input from Aboriginal organizations and collected detailed information on employment, education, culture, housing and other characteristics of persons identified with Aboriginal origins. The APS also included a large subset of the questions that were used to identify persons with disabilities in the HALS, providing a comparable source of information on Aboriginal people with disabilities.

Limitations

Because the sample is drawn from the Census, the APS also tends to undercount the number of Aboriginal persons due to incomplete enumeration of reserves. Also, as with the HALS, the reference year for APS is 1990 but it remains the most recent national source of data on Aboriginal people with disabilities.

Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID)

The SLID is an ongoing longitudinal survey that interviews each sample respondent each year over a six-year period and can be used to generate both longitudinal and cross-sectional data. The data from SLID provide an excellent complement to the Census data since they capture the effects of the recession on employment and income in the period immediately following the recession, from 1993 to 1997.

The SLID data in this report refers to the working age population of people 16 to 64 years of age, excluding full-time students.

Limitations

The population for SLID excludes people living in the territories, residents of institutions, persons living on reserves, and full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces living in barracks.

The SLID cannot provide adequate estimates for the Aboriginal population since it does not target any of the territories or Indian reserves where a large percentage of Aboriginal persons reside. We have no data available to determine if the recovery profile of Aboriginal persons with disabilities is similar to that of all persons with disabilities.

Note on Low Income Cut-Off

Of the several different measures of low income that are used in Canada, the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) was chosen for this report. LICO is a relative measure that establishes a dollar figure below which a family is considered to be living on low income. It can be reported on pre- or post-tax income and vary depending on family size. The figures expressed here are based on the after-tax LICO because it is considered that this provides a better indication of the disposable income that is available to families.

It should also be noted that Statistics Canada does not define LICO as 'the poverty line'. It helps to identify trends and the way wealth is distributed and so it refers to people living below LICO as living in "straitened circumstances". Because the measure is relative there will always be people below the average, but the goal is to identify trends with regard to groups consistently being over represented in the low income categories.

Although the data in this report refers to the LICO, the Market Basket Measure (MBM) is a new measure that has been developed by the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

The MBM identifies income levels required for a basic, adequate standard of living that is above the subsistence level. These income levels are based on the actual costs of goods and services in various communities across Canada. The measure identifies how many people live in households that fall below a defined standard of living.

Compared to existing measures, the MBM takes into account more precisely differing living costs by geographical location.

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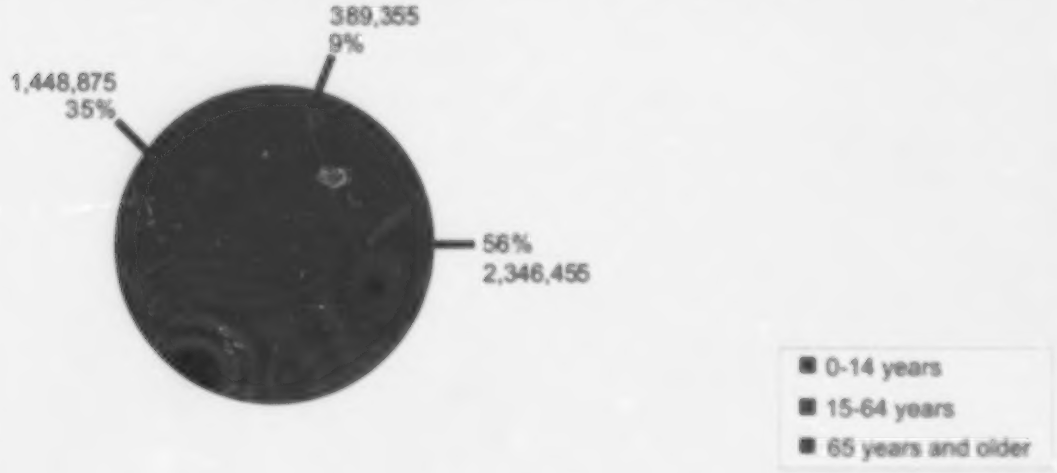
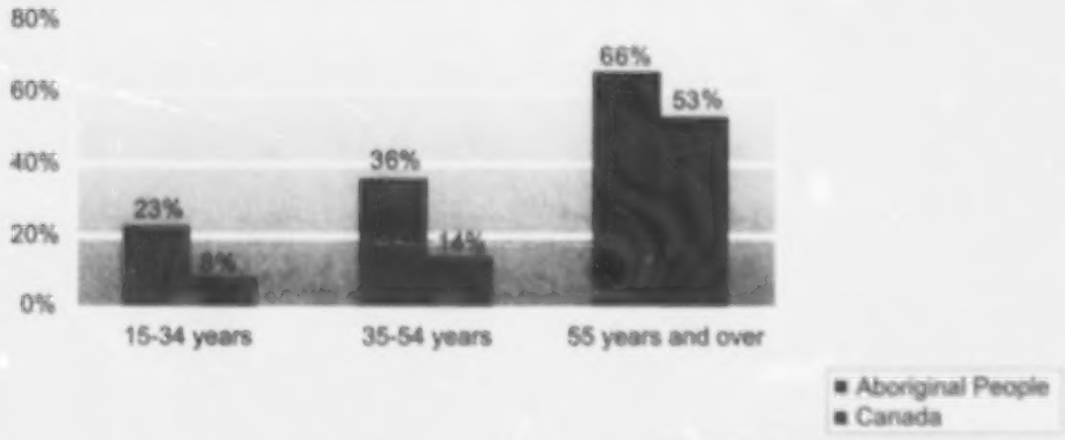
APPENDIX B
DETAILED INDICATORS

Distribution of All Persons With Disabilities by Age Group



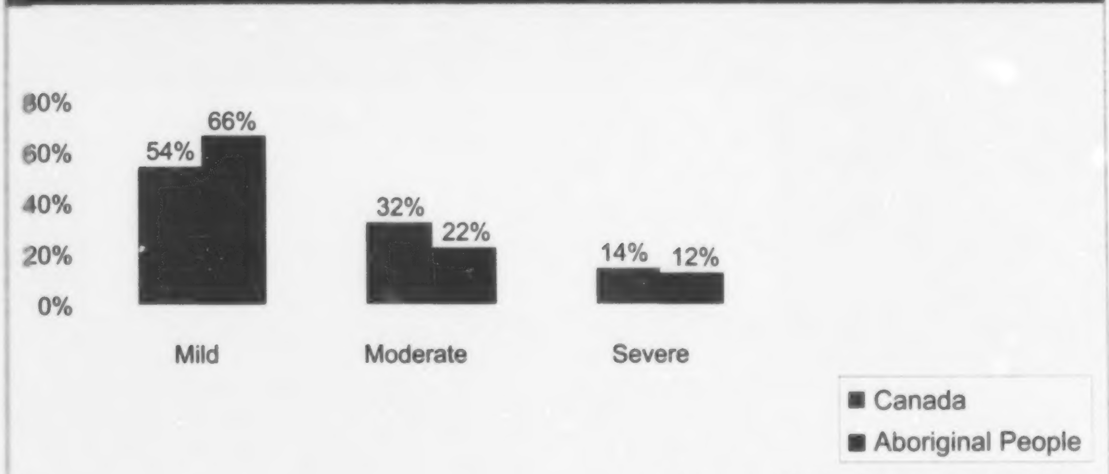
Source: HALS, 1991

Disability Rate by Age Group, Aboriginal People, 1991



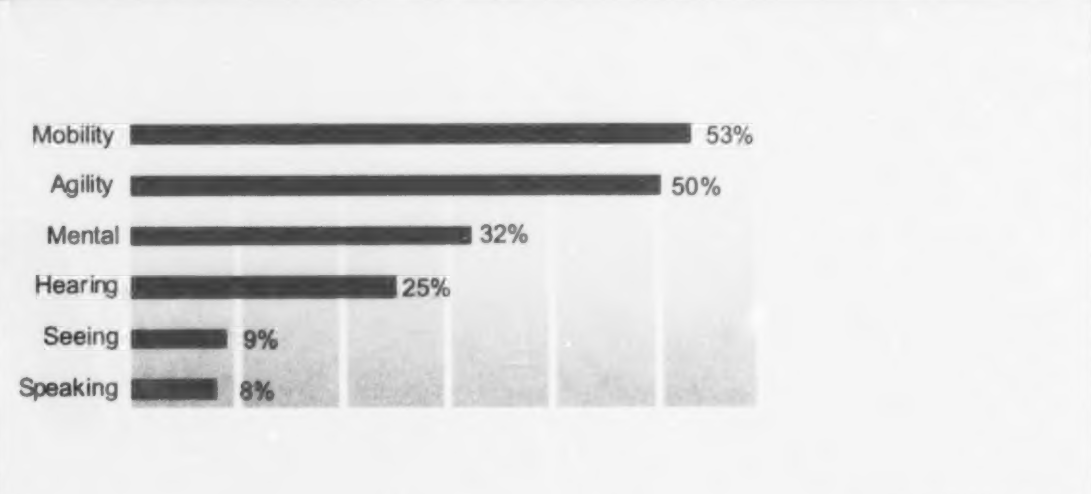
Sources: APS, 1991 and HALS, 1991

Distribution of Working Age Adults with Disabilities by Severity of Disability



Source: HALS, 1991 and APS, 1991

Distribution of all Persons with Disabilities by Disability Type



Source: HALS, 1991

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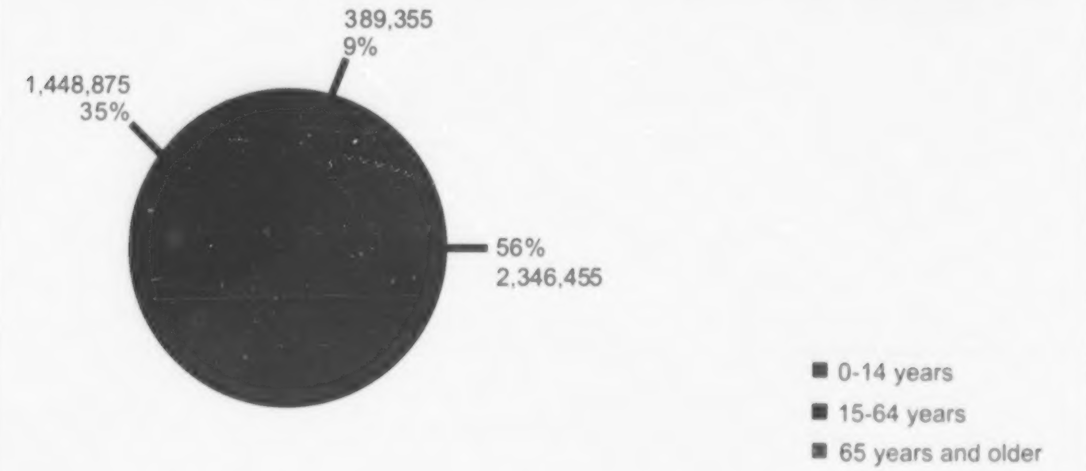
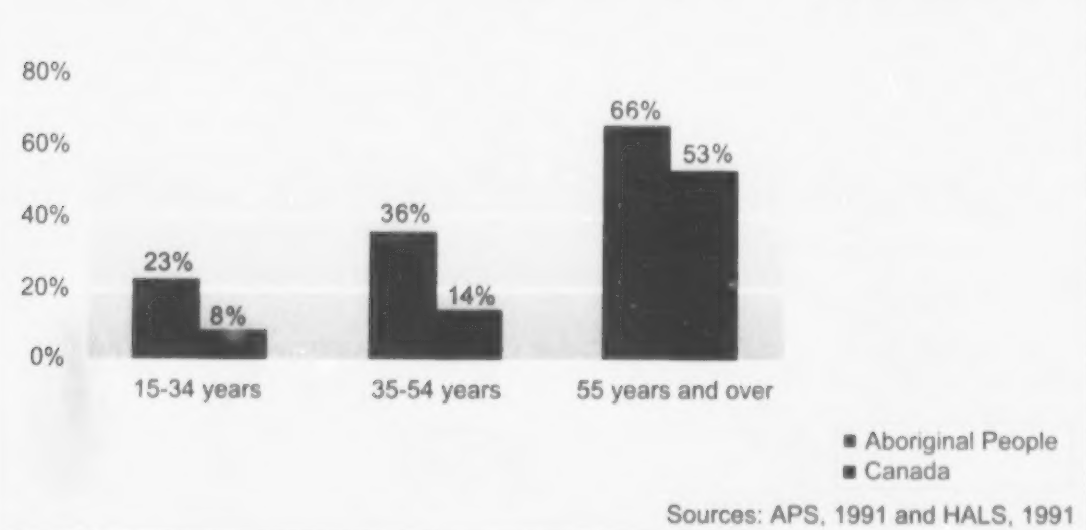


Source: HALS, 1991

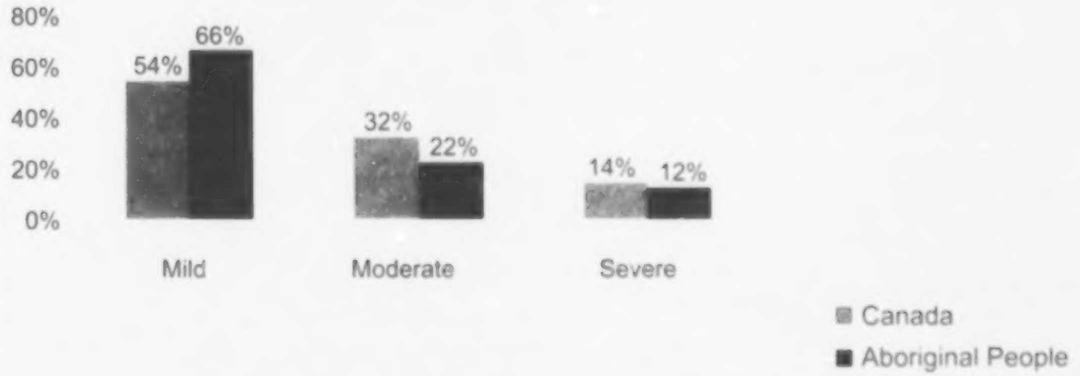
Disability Rate by Age Group, Aboriginal People, 1991



Sources: APS, 1991 and HALS, 1991

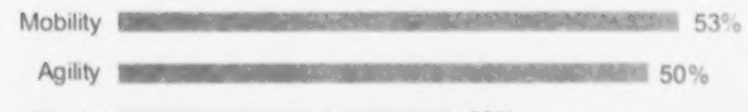
+5

Distribution of Working Age Adults with Disabilities by Severity of Disability



Source: HALS, 1991 and APS, 1991

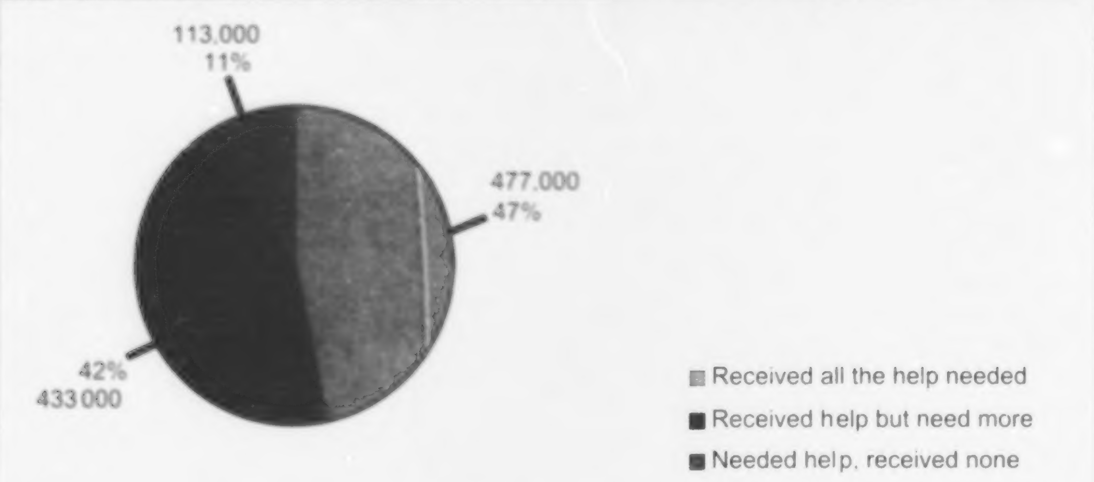
Distribution of all Persons with Disabilities by Disability Type



Source: HALS, 1991

Disability supports

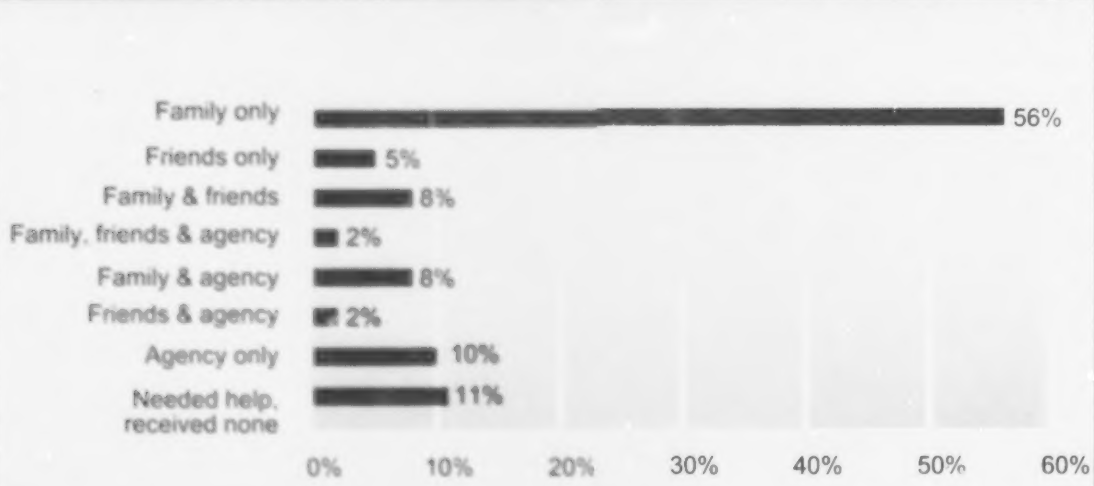
Help with Everyday Activities, Working Age Persons with Disabilities*



* Of those who reported needing some help with everyday activities

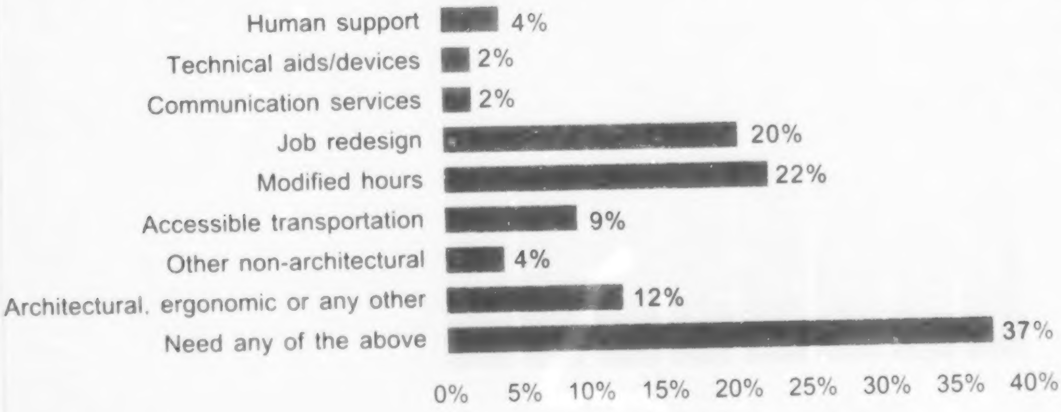
Source: HALS, 1991

Source of Help with Everyday Activities



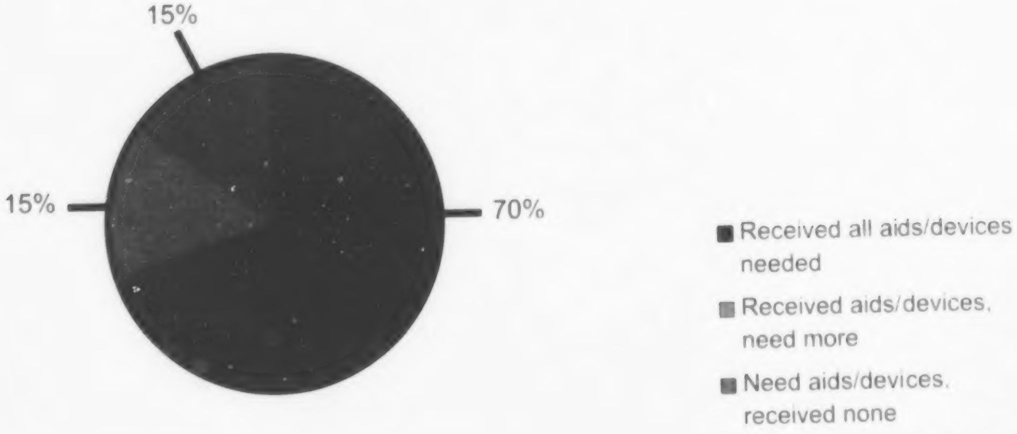
Source: HALS, 1991

Need for Work-related Supports, Persons with Disabilities



Source: HALS, 1991

Unmet Needs for Aids and Devices*

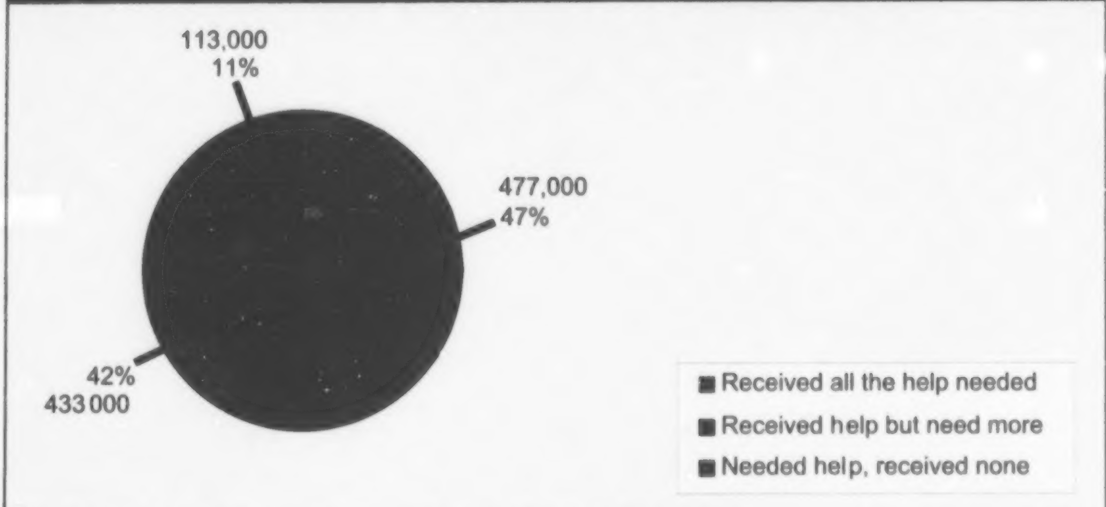


*Of those who reported needing aids and devices

Source: HALS, 1991

Disability supports

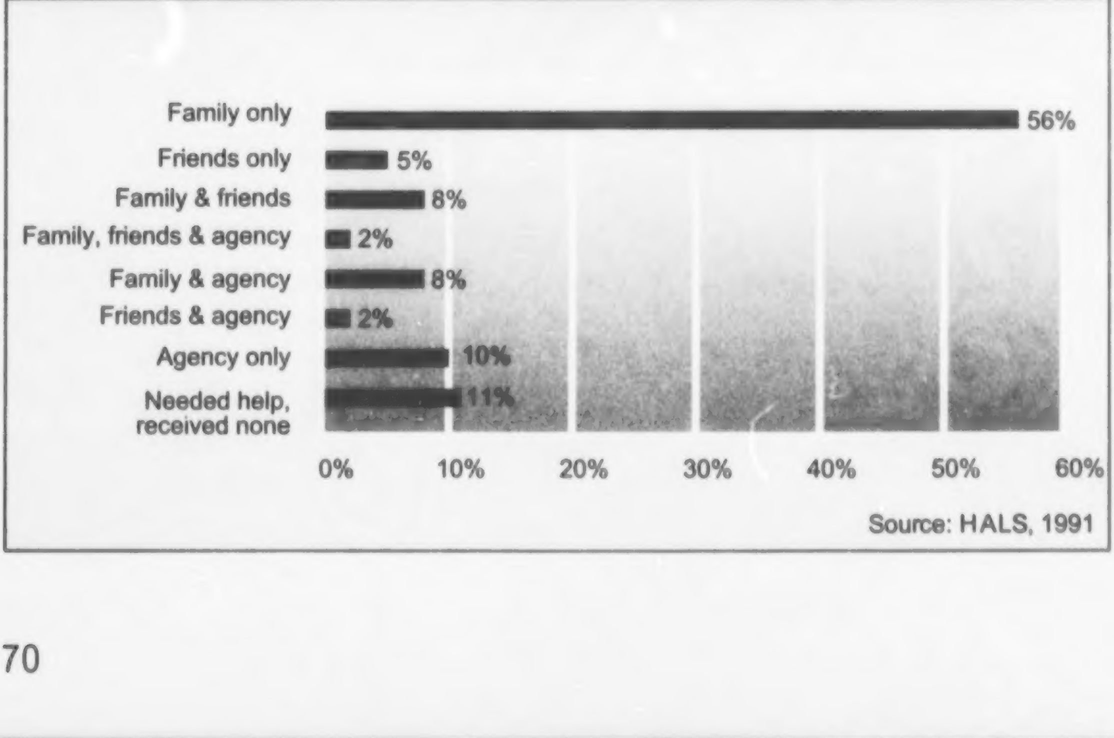
Help with Everyday Activities, Working Age Persons with Disabilities*



* Of those who reported needing some help with everyday activities

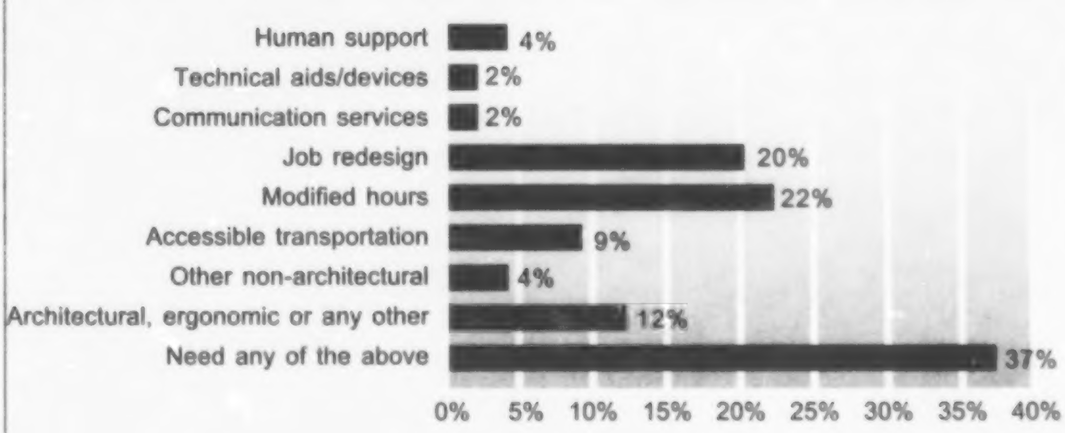
Source: HALS, 1991

Source of Help with Everyday Activities



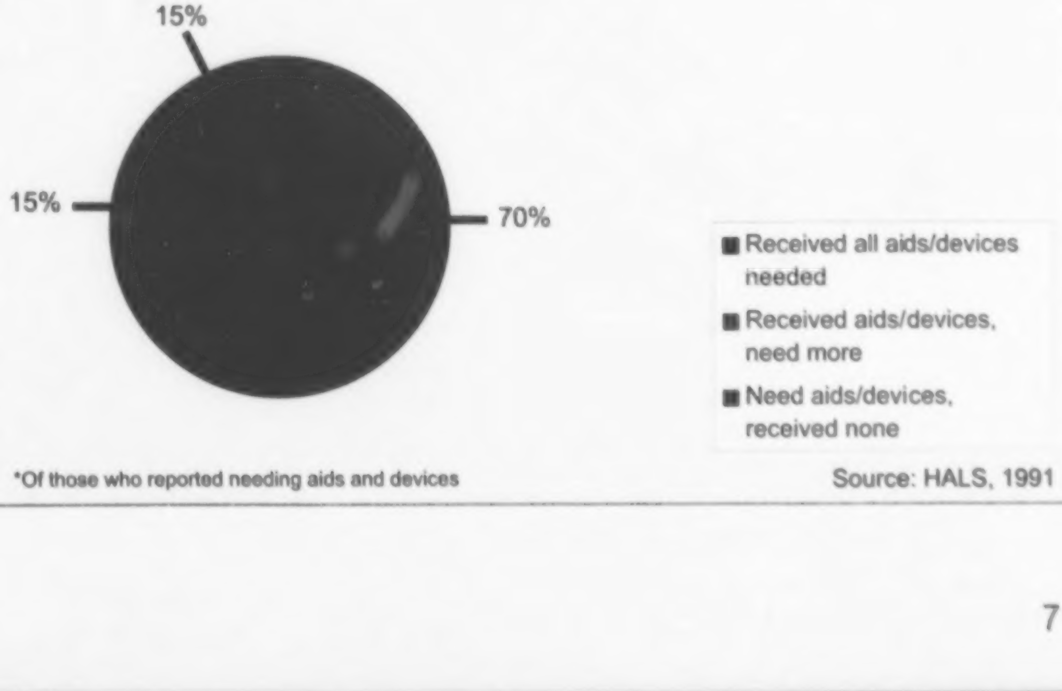
Source: HALS, 1991

Need for Work-related Supports, Persons with Disabilities



Source: HALS, 1991

Unmet Needs for Aids and Devices*

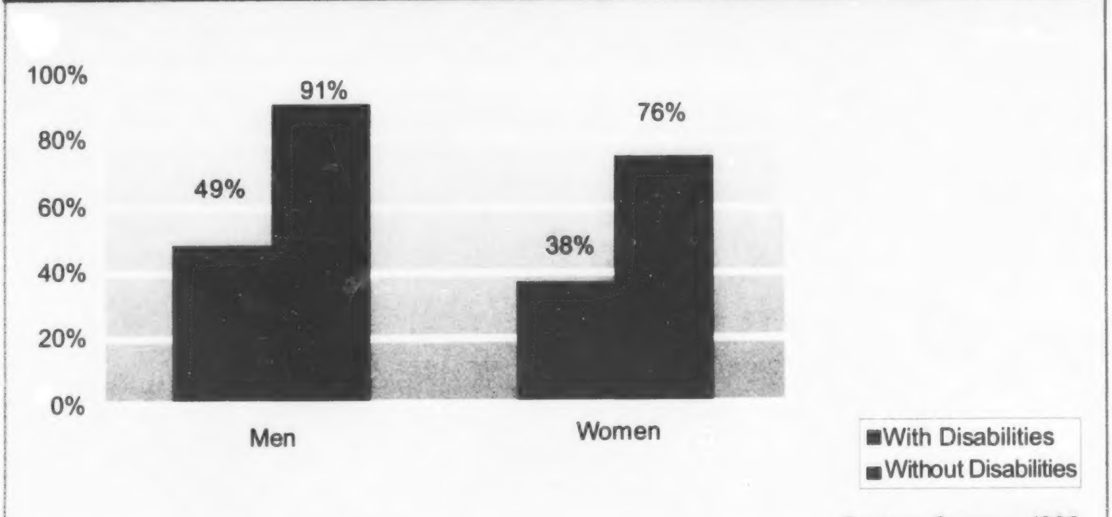


*Of those who reported needing aids and devices

Source: HALS, 1991

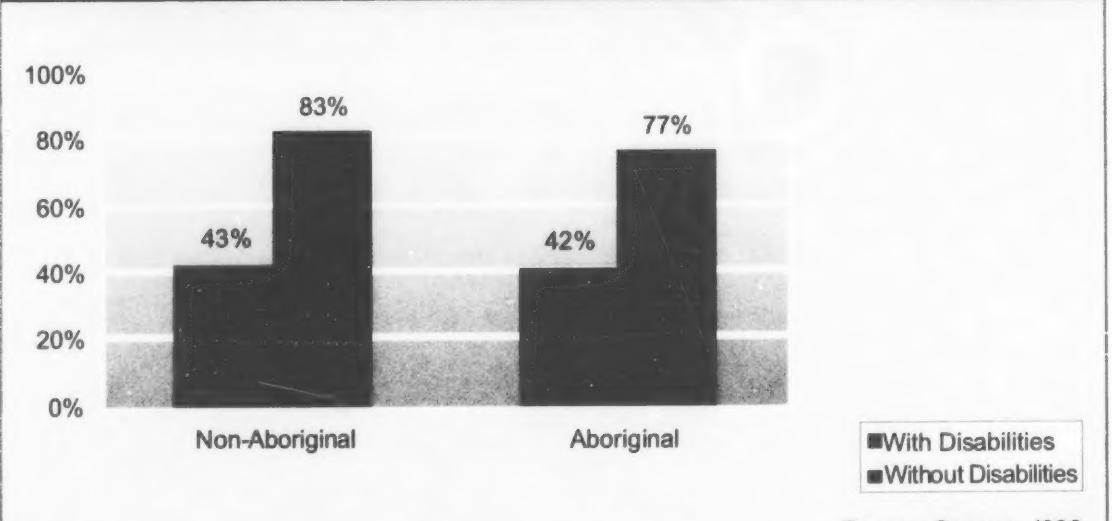
Employment

Labour Force Participation Rates by Disability Status and Gender, 1995



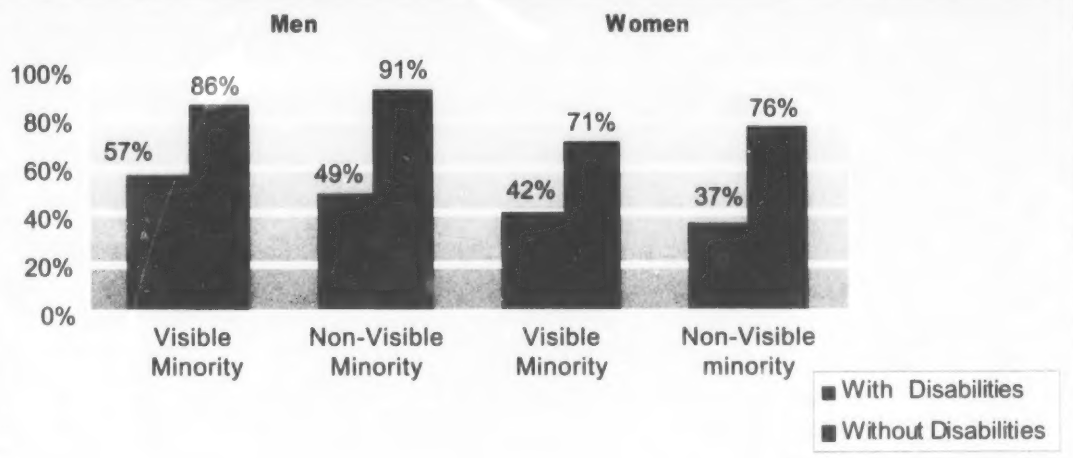
Source: Census, 1996

Labour Force Participation Rates, Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal, 1995



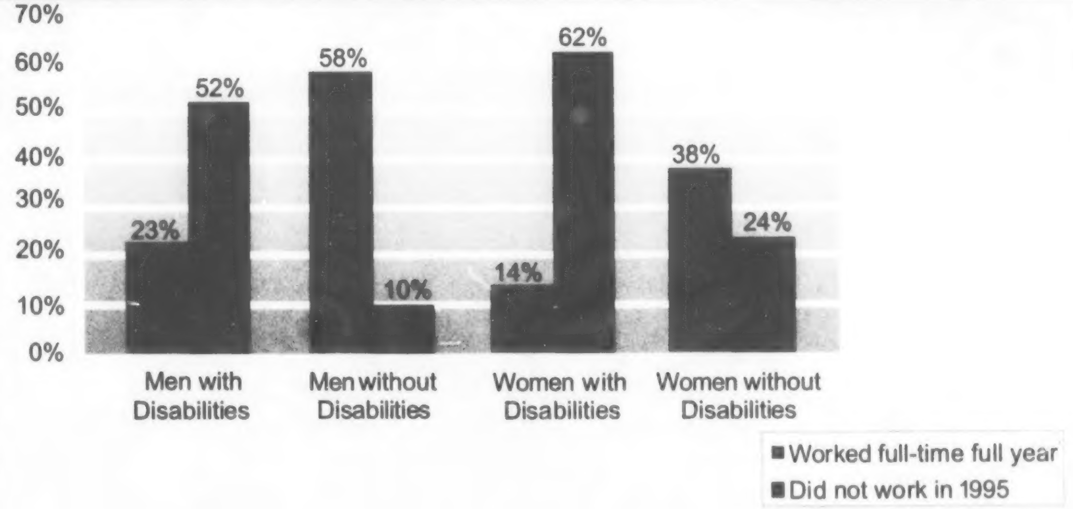
Source: Census, 1996

Labour Force Participation Rates by Visible Minority Status and Gender, 1995



Source: Census, 1996

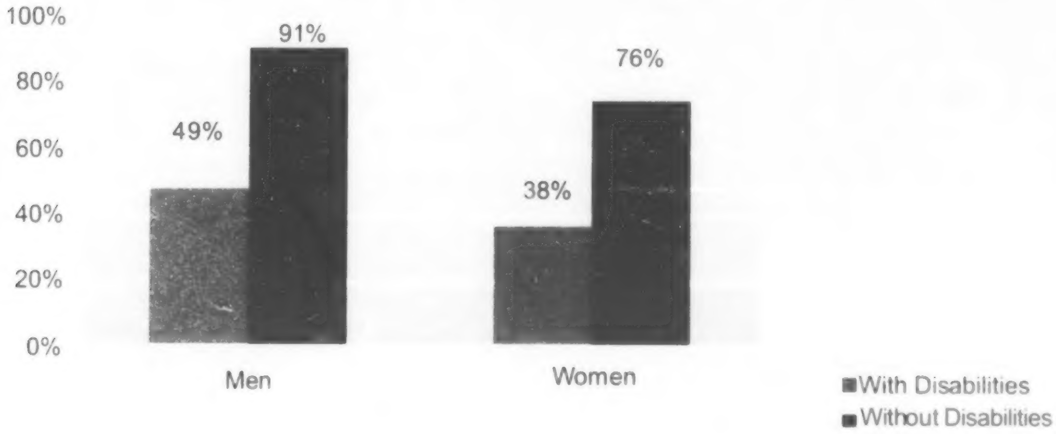
Work Activity by Gender and Disability Status, 1995



Source: Census, 1996

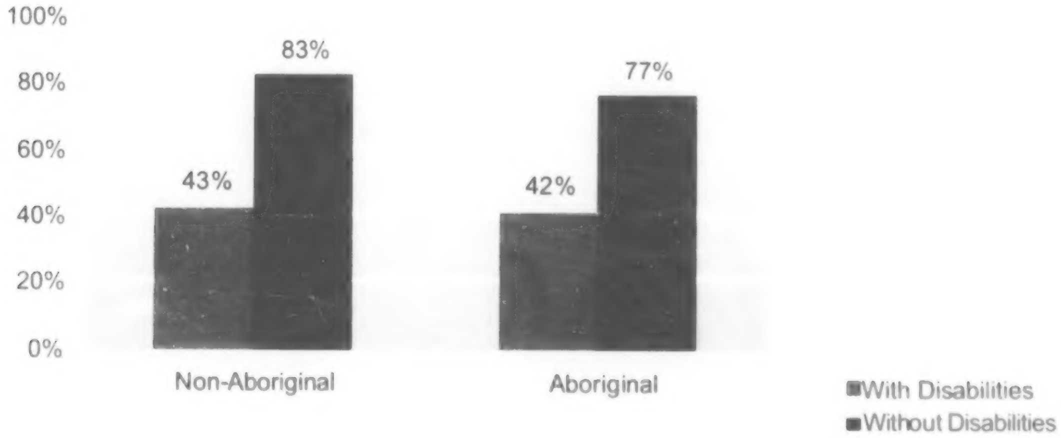
Employment

Labour Force Participation Rates by Disability Status and Gender, 1995



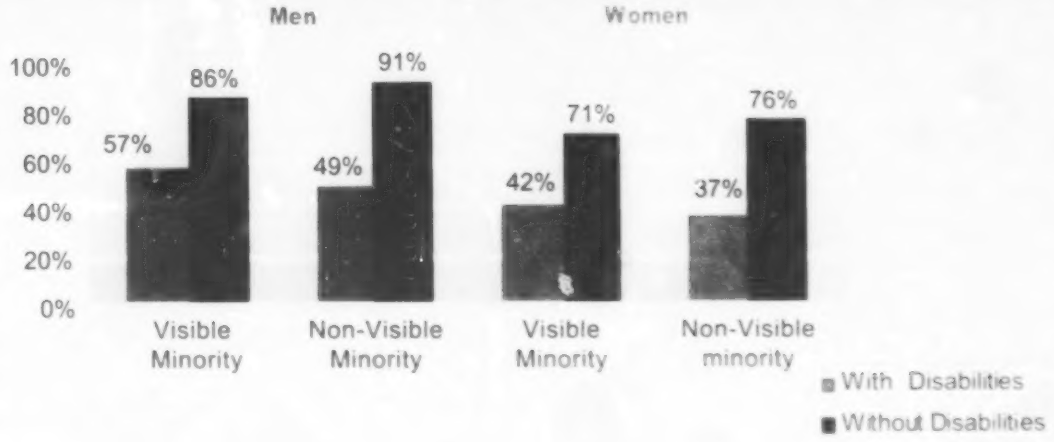
Source: Census, 1996

Labour Force Participation Rates, Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal, 1995



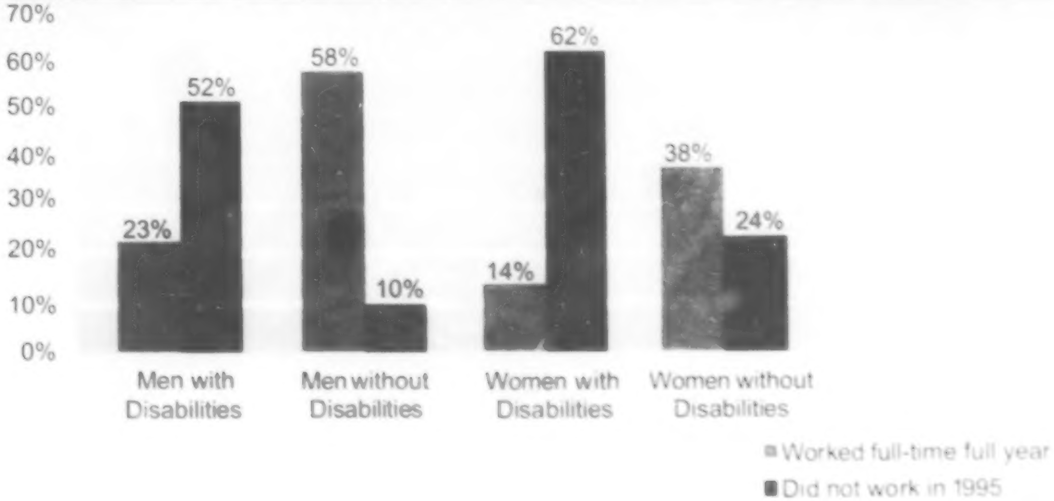
Source: Census, 1996

Labour Force Participation Rates by Visible Minority Status and Gender, 1995

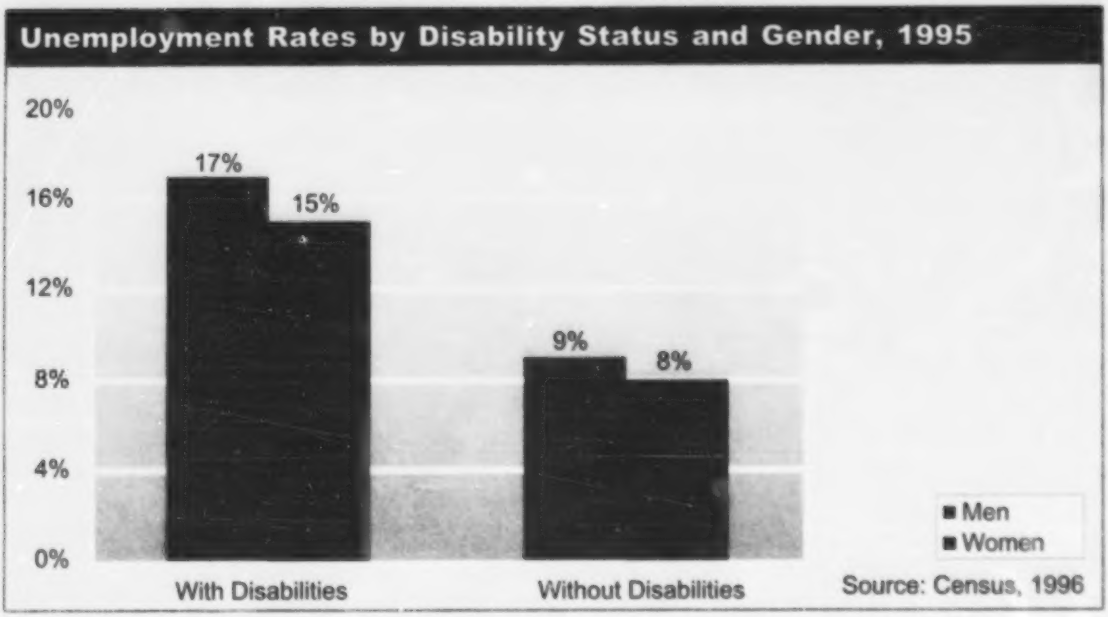


Source: Census, 1996

Work Activity by Gender and Disability Status, 1995

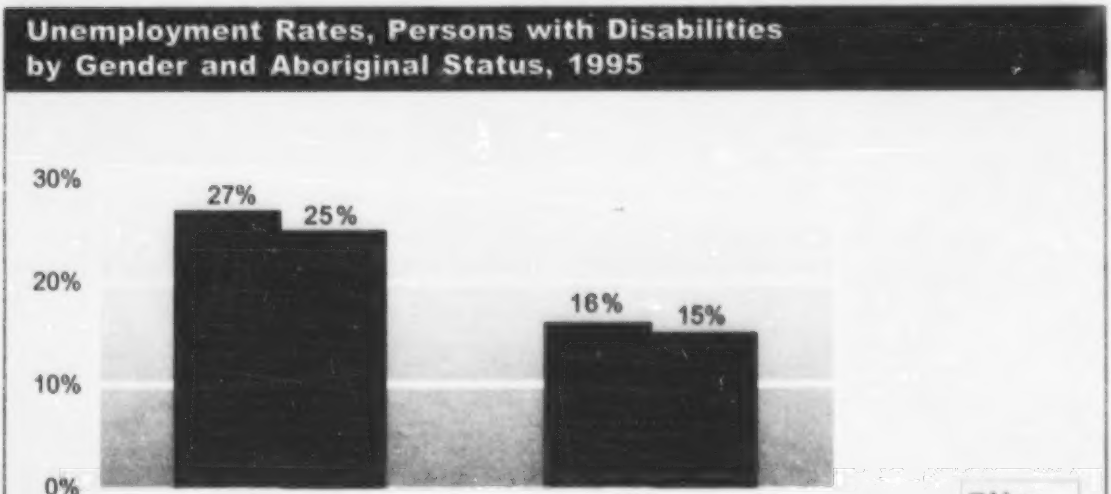


Source: Census, 1996



Unemployment Rates by Disability Status and Gender, 1995

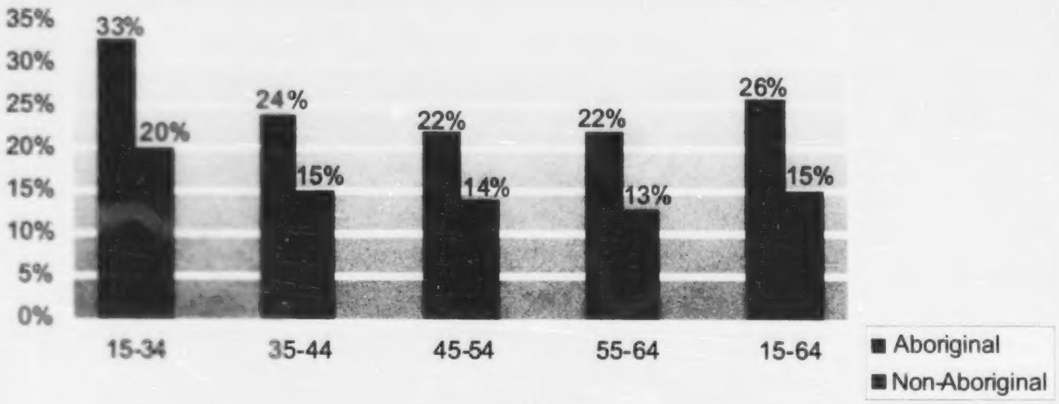
Source: Census, 1996



Unemployment Rates, Persons with Disabilities by Gender and Aboriginal Status, 1995

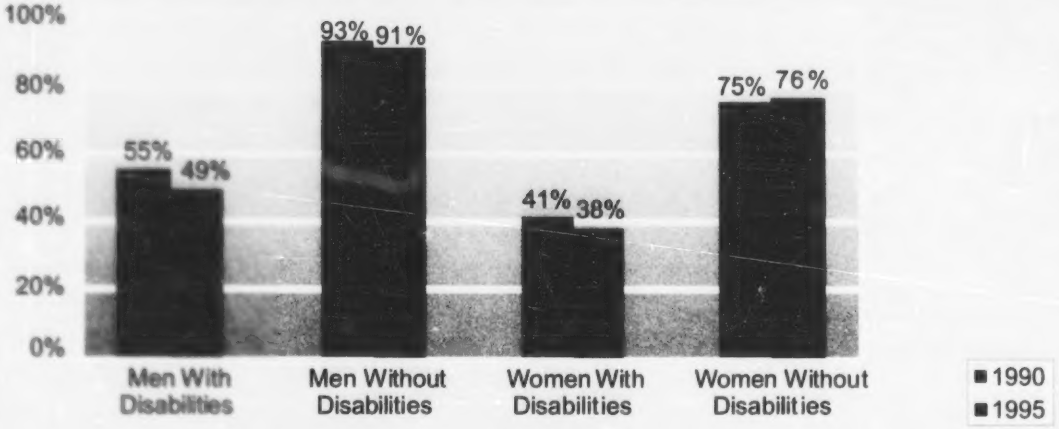
Source: Census, 1996

Unemployment Rates, Aboriginal People with Disabilities by Age Group, 1995



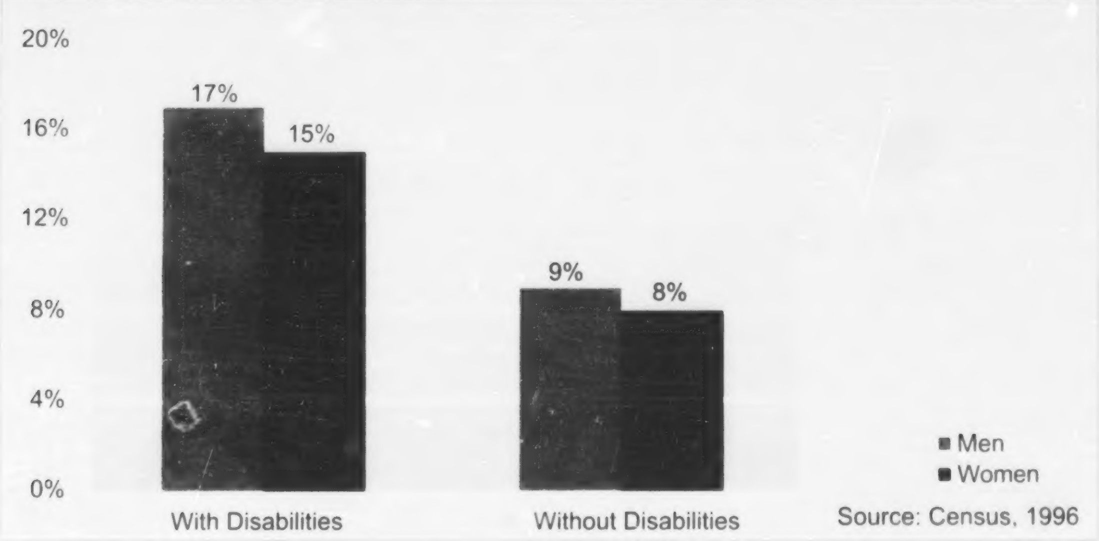
Source: Census, 1991 and 1996

Labour Force Participation Rates by Gender and Disability Status, 1990 & 1995



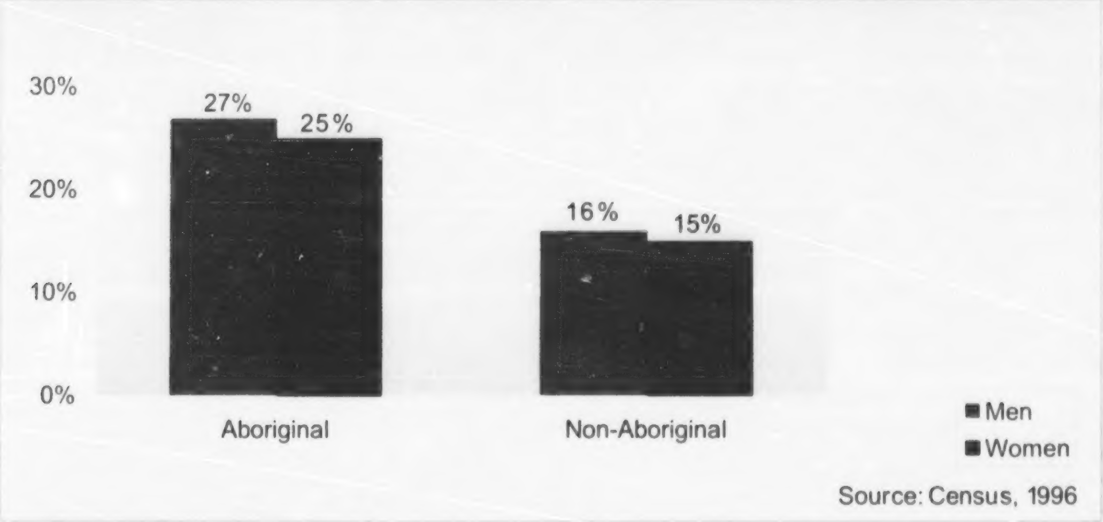
Source: Census, 1991 and 1996

Unemployment Rates by Disability Status and Gender, 1995



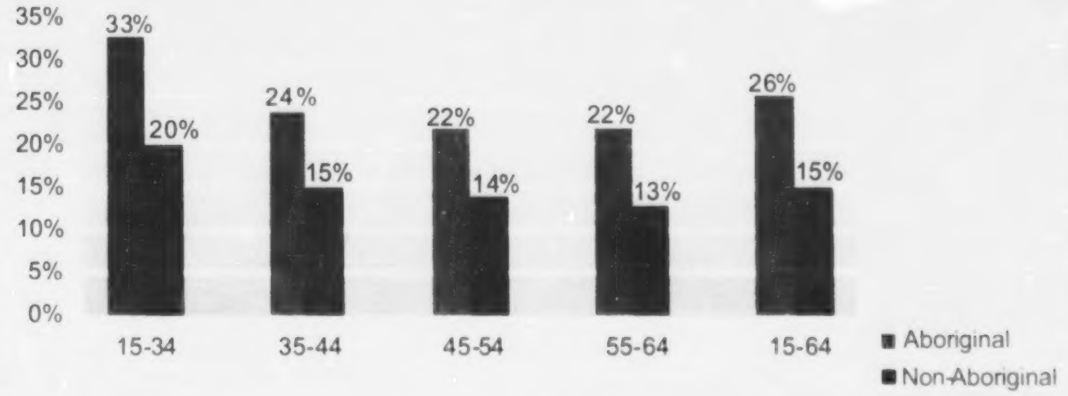
Source: Census, 1996

Unemployment Rates, Persons with Disabilities by Gender and Aboriginal Status, 1995



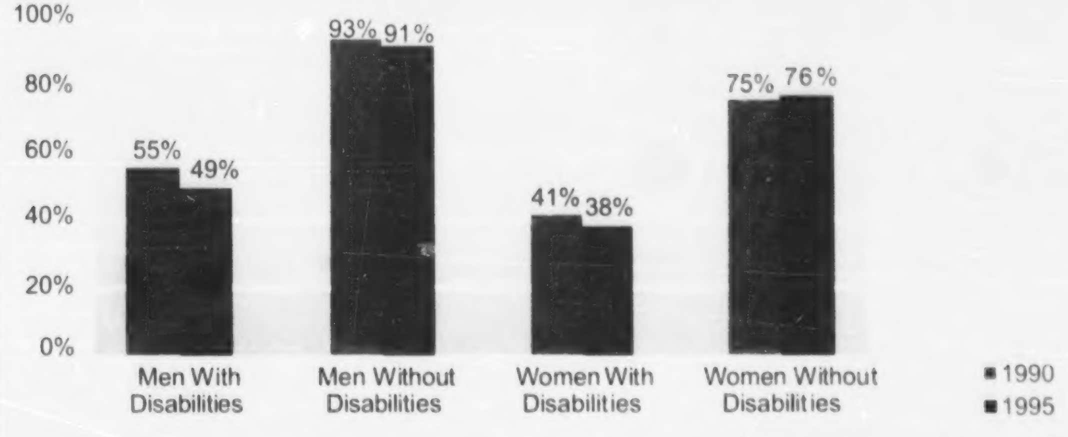
Source: Census, 1996

Unemployment Rates, Aboriginal People with Disabilities by Age Group, 1995



Source: Census, 1991 and 1996

Labour Force Participation Rates by Gender and Disability Status, 1990 & 1995



Source: Census, 1991 and 1996

Work Activity 1990 and 1995, by Disability Status and Gender

	Full-time/ Full-year		Part-time/ Full-year		Part-year (full/part-time)		Did not work	
	1990	1995	1990	1995	1990	1995	1990	1995
Men with Disabilities	28%	23%	2 %	2%	26%	23%	44%	52%
Men without Disabilities	**61%**	**58%**	**2%**	**2%**	**30%**	**30%**	**7%**	**10%**
Women with Disabilities	17%	14%	4%	5%	22%	19%	57%	62%
Women without Disabilities	**40%**	**38%**	**8%**	**9%**	**30%**	**29%**	**23%**	**24%**

Source: Census 1991, 1996

Work Activity 1990 and 1995: Did not Work

	1990	Percentage Point Gap	1995	Percentage Point Gap
Men with disabilities	44%	37	52%	42
Men without disabilities	7%		10%	
Women with disabilities	57%	34	62%	38
Women without disabilities	23%		24%	

Source: Census, 1991 and 1996

Work Activity 1990 and 1995, by Disability Status and Gender

	Full-time/ Full-year		Part-time/ Full-year		Part-year (full/part-time)		Did not work	
	1990	1995	1990	1995	1990	1995	1990	1995
Men with Disabilities	28%	23%	2 %	2%	26%	23%	44%	52%
Men without Disabilities	61%	58%	2%	2%	30%	30%	7%	10%
Women with Disabilities	17%	14%	4%	5%	22%	19%	57%	62%
Women without Disabilities	40%	38%	8%	9%	30%	29%	23%	24%

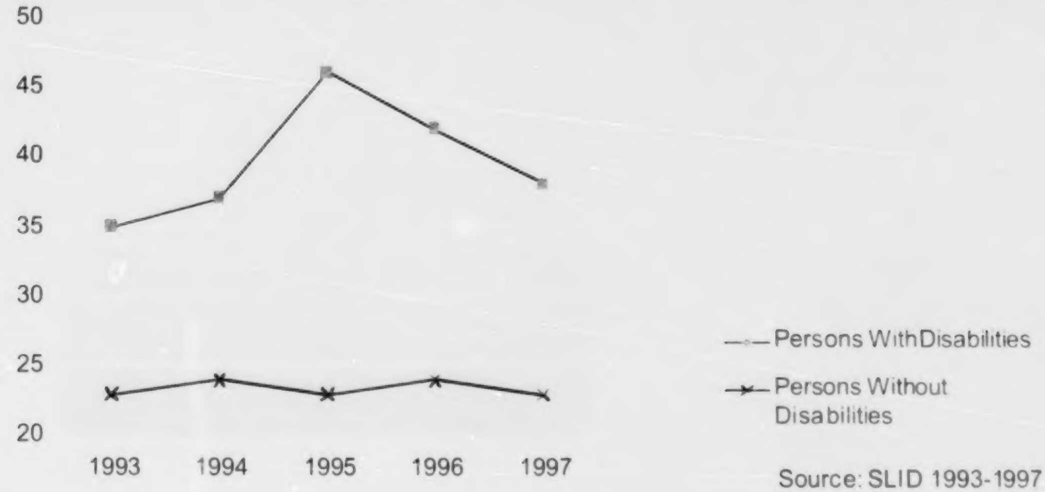
Source: Census 1991, 1996

Work Activity 1990 and 1995: Did not Work

	1990	Percentage Point Gap	1995	Percentage Point Gap
Men with disabilities	44%	37	52%	42
Men without disabilities	7%		10%	
Women with disabilities	57%	34	62%	38
Women without disabilities	23%		24%	

Source: Census, 1991 and 1996

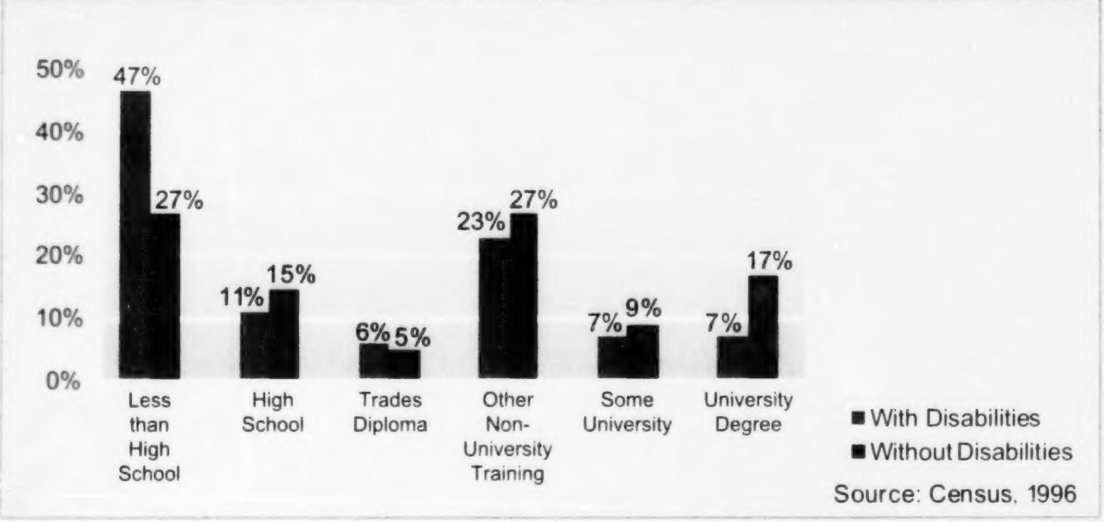
Depth of Unemployment: 40 or More Weeks of Unemployment Among those who Experienced some Unemployment



Source: SLID 1993-1997

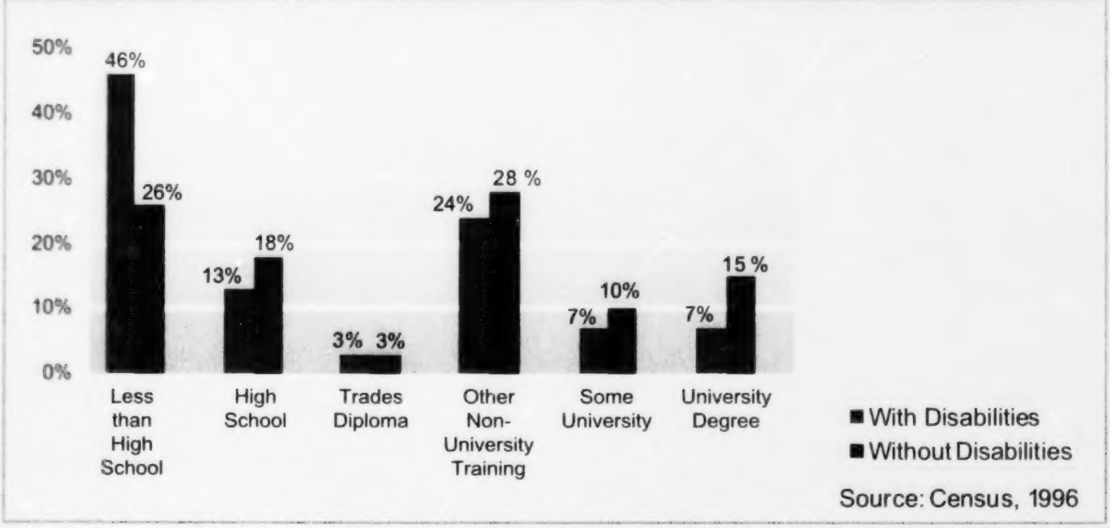
Education

Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Men with and without Disabilities, 1995



Source: Census, 1996

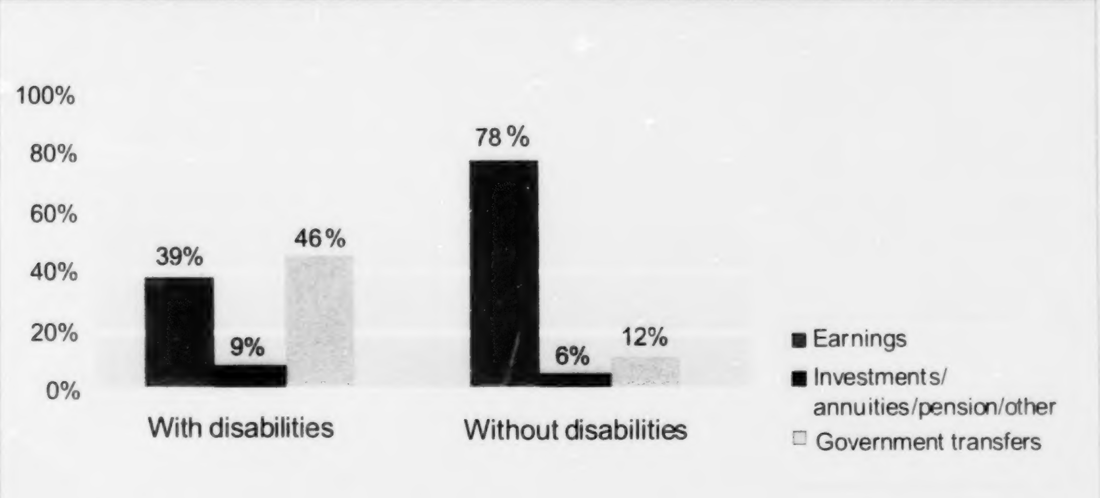
Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Women with and without Disabilities



Source: Census, 1996

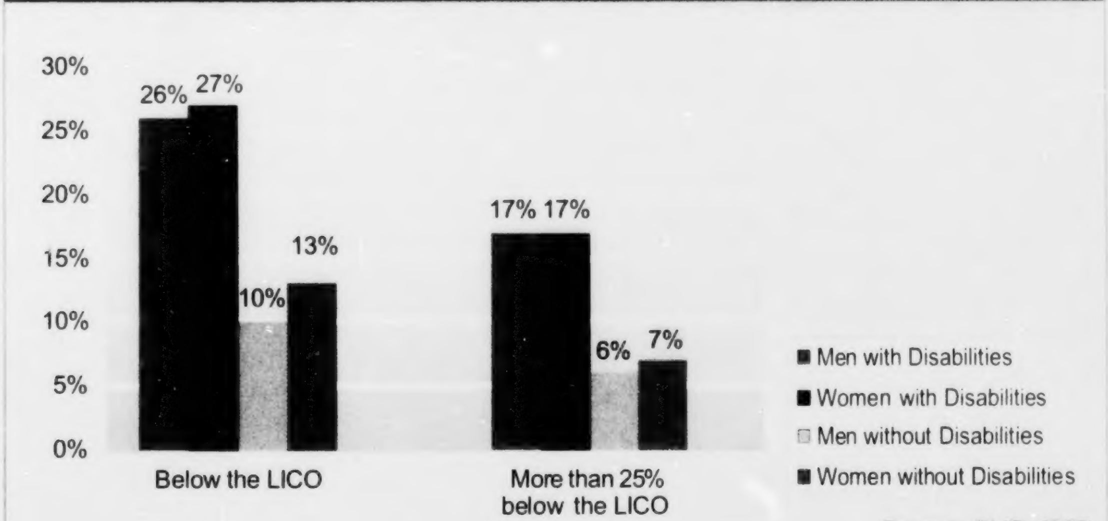
Income

Largest Source of Personal Income, 1997



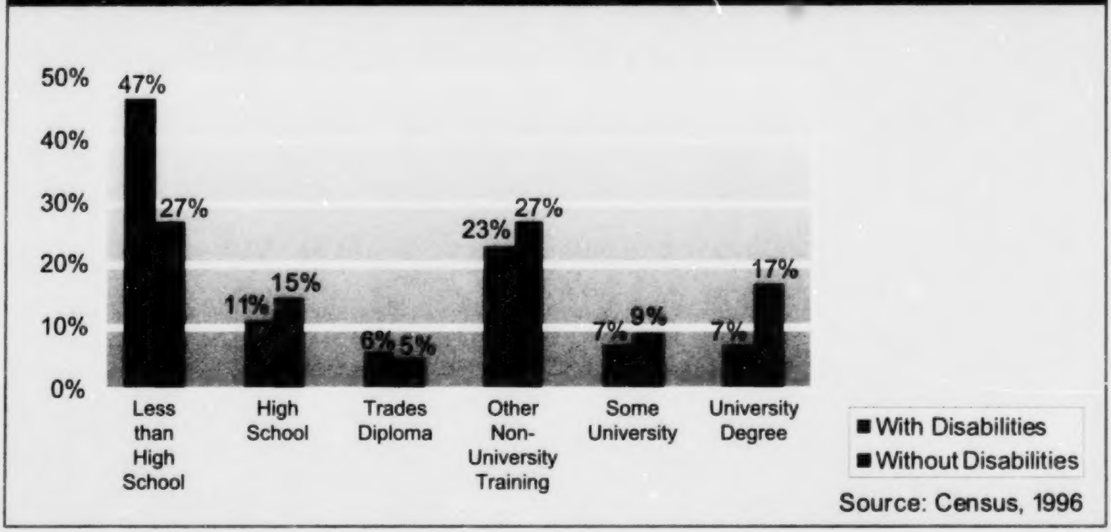
Source: SLID, 1997

Low income Cut-off (after tax) 1997, Men and Women Aged 16-64



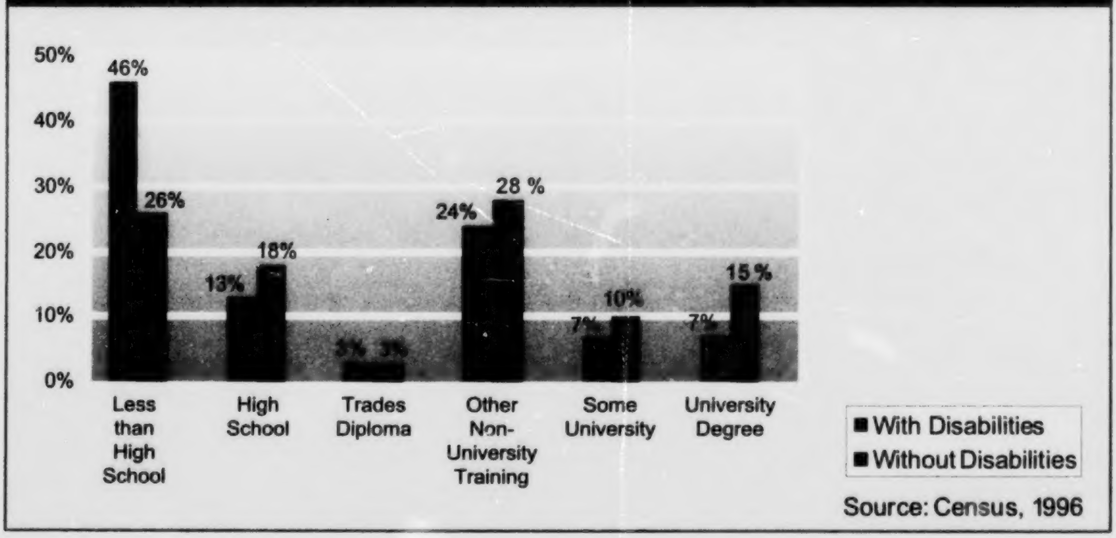
Source: SLID, 1997

Education



Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Men with and without Disabilities, 1995

Source: Census, 1996

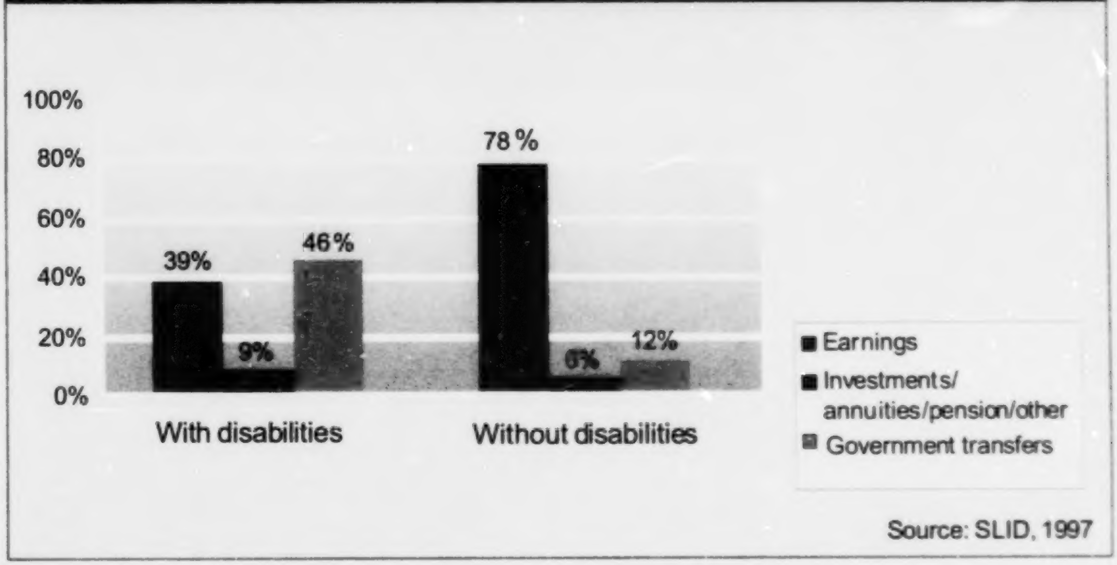


Highest Level of Educational Attainment, Women with and without Disabilities

Source: Census, 1996

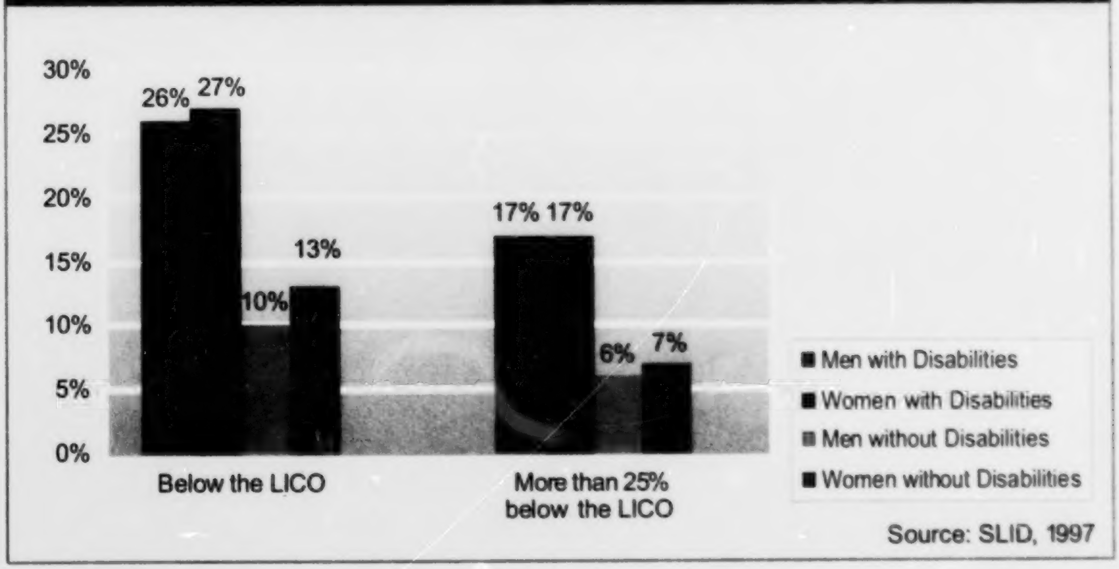
Income

Largest Source of Personal Income, 1997



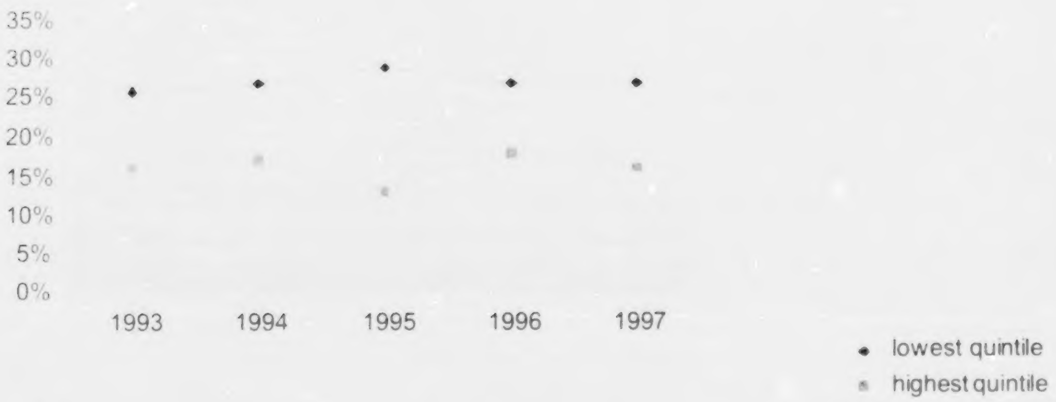
Source: SLID, 1997

Low income Cut-off (after tax) 1997, Men and Women Aged 16-64



Source: SLID, 1997

Persons with Disabilities by Hourly Wage Quintile



Source: SLID, 1993-1997

APPENDIX C

CONTACTS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Aboriginal Development Network Enhancement Recruitment Business

Brenda Giesbrecht
Aboriginal Development Network
Enhancement Recruitment Business
6721-2nd Ave. S.W.
Edmonton, AB T6X 1A3

phone: (780) 476-7125
fax: (780) 469-1496

Aboriginal Persons with Disabilities Program

Merileen McCormick
Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development
304-181 Higgins Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3G1

phone: (204) 989-7112
fax: (204) 989-7113
email: mmccormick@abcentre.org

Adult Services Program

Gladys Loewen
Adult Services Program
Suite 112 - 1750 West 75th Ave.
Vancouver, BC V6P 6G2

phone: (604) 264-8295
fax: (604) 263-2267
email: gloewen@aspbc.org
web site: www.aspbc.org

Alberta's Persons with Developmental Disabilities Initiative

Maureen Murphy-Black
Persons with Developmental Disabilities
Alberta Provincial Board
Peace Hills Trust Towers
4th Floor
10011-109th Street
Edmonton, AB P5J 3S8

phone: (780) 427-1177
fax: (780) 427-1220

Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)

Peggy Thiessen
Manager, AISH Program
Department of Human Resources
and Employment
14th floor, 7th Street Plaza
10030-107th Street
Edmonton, AB T5J 3E1

phone: (780) 422-6783
fax: (780) 422-0032
email: peggy.thiessen@gov.ab.ca

Bay St-George Community Employment Corporation

Ray McIsaac
Bay St-George Community
Employment Corporation
35 Carolina Avenue,
Stephenville, NF A2N 3P8

phone: (709) 643-3470
fax: (709) 643-3421

Boeing Canada

Krista Stevens
Communications Specialist
Boeing Canada Technology Ltd.,
Winnipeg Division
99 Murray Park Road,
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3M6

phone: (204) 831-2494
fax: (204) 837-2807
email: krista.stevens@boeing.com

Comité d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre (CAMO)

1030 Cherrier Street
Suite 404
Montréal, QC H2L 1H9

phone: (514) 522-3310
fax: (514) 522-4708
TTY: (514) 522-5425
toll-free: 1 888 522-3310

Community AccessAbility Program

Lisa Kourtalis
Senior Liaison and Grants Officer
Ministry of Citizenship,
Culture and Recreation
Equal Opportunity and Disability
Access Branch
Community ACCESS-Ability Projects
3rd floor, 400 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9

phone:	(416) 314-1854
TTY:	(416) 326-0148 from the 416/905 local calling area; or 1 888 335-6611 toll-free in Ontario
web site:	www.gov.on.ca:80/MCZCR/english/citdiv/disabled/access-ability.htm

Community ACCESS-ability Program

Karen Ramsland
Project Administrator
Community Access Grant Program
Service Nova Scotia and Municipal
Relations
Municipal Services Division
P.O. Box 216
Halifax, NS B3J 2M4

phone:	(902) 424-7798
fax:	(902) 424-0821
email:	kramslan@gov.ns.ca

Conference Board of Canada Partnership Project

Estella Cohen
Program Consultant
Equal Opportunity and
Disability Access Branch
Ministry of Citizenship,
Culture and Recreation
400 University Ave, 3rd Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9

phone:	(416) 314-0279
fax:	(416) 326-9725

Grand River Employment and Training and Special Services for Special People

Sheila Hill-Steyers
Grand River Employment and Training
Six Nations Employment
and Business Centre
P.O. Box 69
Ohsweken, ON N0A 1M0

phone: (519) 445-2222 or
1 888 218-8230
fax: (519) 445-4777
email: shill@worldchat.com
web site: www.greatsn.com

Carolyn Beaver
Executive Director
Special Services for
Special People Program
P.O. Box 120
Ohsweken, ON N0A 1M0

phone: (519) 445-4420
fax: (519) 445-0244
web site: www.joshco.com/sssp

Heightening Awareness Leading to Opportunity (HALO)

British Columbia Aboriginal Network on
Disability Society
1179 Kosapaum Crescent
Victoria, BC V9A 7K7

phone: (250) 381-7303
toll free: 1-888-815-5511
fax: (250) 381-7312
email: info@bcands.bc.ca
web site: www.bcands.bc.ca

Inclusive Transportation Initiative

Grant Brennan, Project Coordinator
Inclusive Transportation Project
Service Nova Scotia
and Municipal Relations
P.O. Box 216
Halifax, NS B3J 2M4

phone: (902) 424-7416
fax: (902) 424-0531
email: brennagw@gov.ns.ca
web site: www.gov.ns.ca/
snsmr/dialaride

Managing Diversity Practices and Integrating Persons with Disabilities into the Workplace

Estella Cohen
Program Consultant
Equal Opportunity
and Disability Access Branch
Ministry of Citizenship,
Culture and Recreation
400 University Ave, 3rd Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9

phone:	(416) 314-0279
fax:	(416) 326-9725

Manitoba Home Health Care Program (MHHCP)

Darlene Marcoux
Coordinator of Self-Managed Care
Independent Living Resource Centre
393 Portage Ave., Suite 311A
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3H6

phone:	(204) 947-0194
fax:	(204) 942-3146

MHHCP (cont'd)

Eckhard Goerz
Community Programs Consultant
Manitoba Health Programs
Continuing Care
2063-300 Carlton Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3M9

phone:	(204) 788-6634
fax:	(204) 948-2366

Métis National Council Reference Group on Ability Issues

Laura Langstaff
Director, Ability Issues
Métis National Council
350 Sparks Street, Suite 201
Delta Hotel Office Tower
Ottawa ON K1R 7S8

phone:	(613) 232-3216
fax:	(613) 232-4262
email:	laura@mnc.ca

Multi-Partner Pilot Projet – Returning to Work

Nancy Lawand
Director
Canada Pension Plan Program Policy
Human Resources Development Canada
Place Vanier, 8th Floor, Tower B
355 River Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0L1

phone: (613) 941-8812
fax: (613) 991-9119
email: nancy.lawand@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca

Blake Williams
Workers' Advisory Group
BC Ministry of Labour
Suite 3000, 8171 Ackroyd Road
Richmond, BC V6X 3K1

phone: (604) 660-7890,
fax: (604) 660-4161 or
(604) 660-5284
email: BHWILLIA@wao-bc.org

National Aboriginal Clearing/ Connecting House on Disability Issues

Kyle Prettyshield
#200-103A Packham Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7N 4K4

phone: (306) 477-7303
toll-free 1 888 661-0766
fax: (306) 477-8894
email: pretk@fsin.com
web site: www.clearinghouse.fsin.com/index.htm

National Educational Association of Disabled Students

Frank Smith
Executive Director NEADS
Rm. 426, Unicentre
Carleton University
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6

phone: 613-526-8008
email: info@neads.ca

National Library/CNIB Task Force on Access to Information for Print Disabled

Gwynneth Evans
Director General
National and International Programs
National Library of Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N4

phone:	(613) 995-3904
fax:	(613) 947-2916
email:	gwynneth.evans@nlc-bnc.ca

Dr. Euclid Herie
President and CEO
Canadian National Institute for the Blind
929 Bayview Avenue
Toronto, ON M4G 3E8

phone:	(416) 480-7588
fax:	(416) 480-7000
email:	heriee@cnib.ca

Neil Squire Foundation

Gary Birch
Executive Director
Neil Squire Foundation
Suite 220-2250 Boundary Rd.
Burnaby, BC V5M 3Z3

phone:	(604) 473-9363
fax:	(604) 473-9364
web site:	www.neilsquire.ca

Networking Employment Opportunities Now

Mette Halley
Child and Family Services
Box 1500
Montague, PE C0A 1R0

phone:	(902) 838-0721
fax:	(902) 838-0727

New Brunswick's Disability Supplement

Department of Family
and Community Services
Policy and Planning Division
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

phone:	(506) 453-2460
fax:	(506) 453-7478

New Brunswick's Equal Employment Opportunities Program

Doug Bridgman
Department of Finance
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

phone: (506) 444-4451
fax: (506) 453-2124
email: Doug.Bridgman@gnb.ca

Northwest Territories Study Grants

France Benoit
Manager of Student Financial Assistance Program
Department of Education, Culture & Employment
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

phone: (867) 873-7194
fax: (867) 873-0443
web site: www.nwtsfa.nt.ca

Nunavut Future of Work Conference

Robert Buckle
Director, Policy & Planning
Department of Culture, Language, Elders & Youth
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